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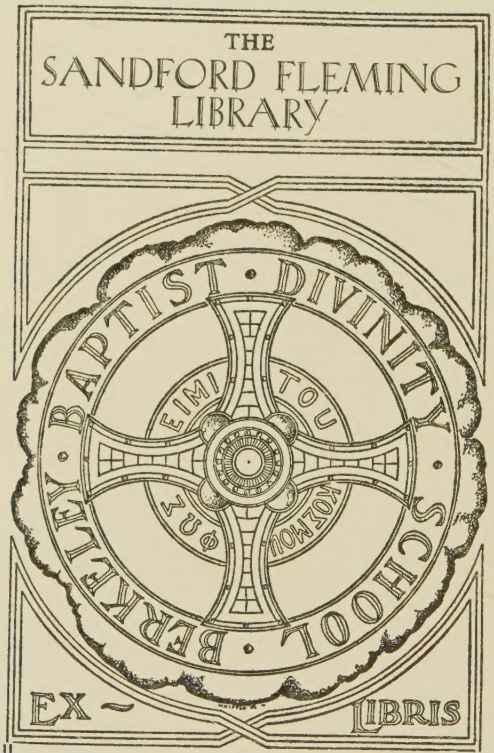

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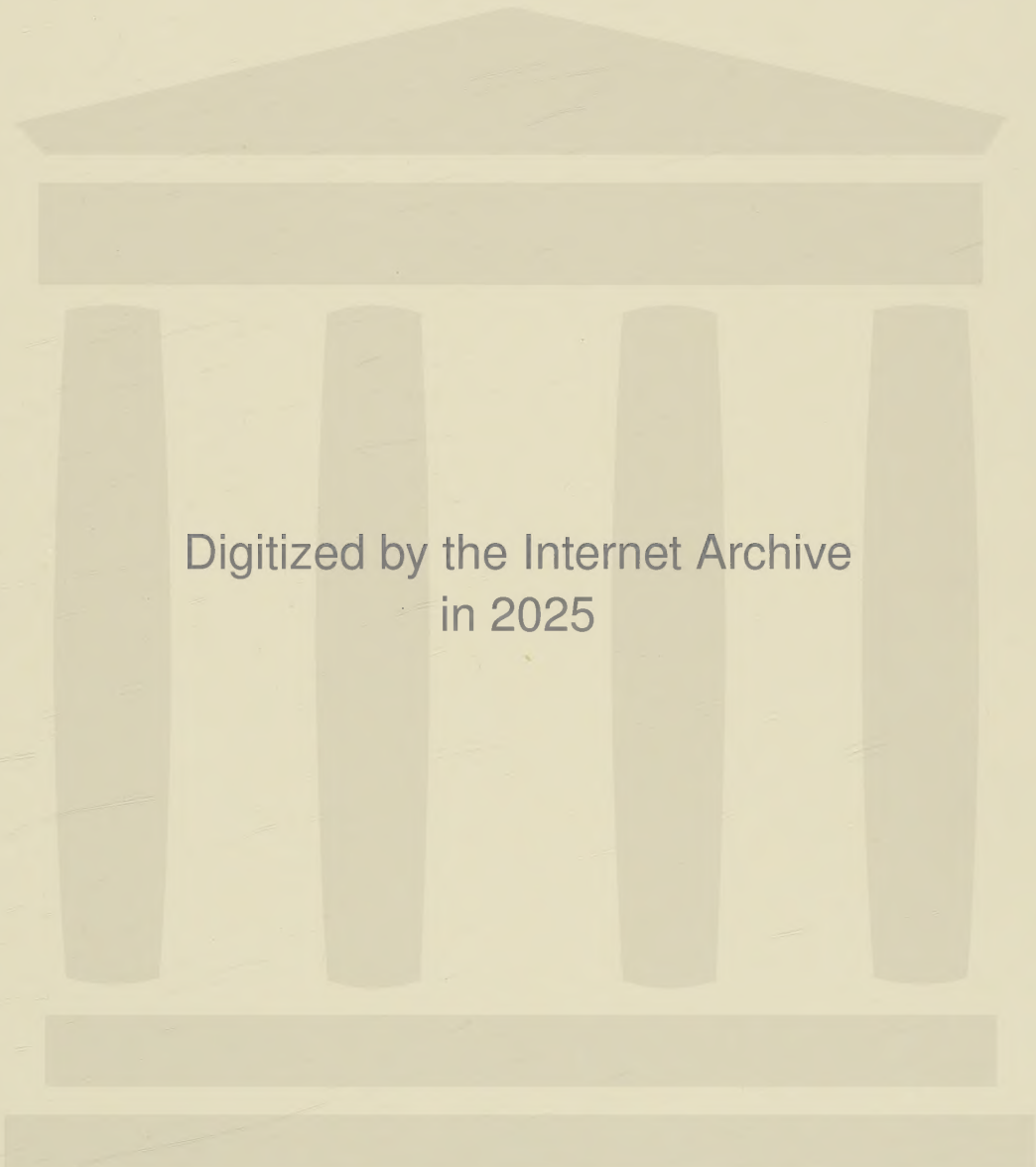

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MENNONITE LIFE

January, 1961

NEW MENNO MEMORIAL CHURCH, WITMARSUM, THE NETHERLANDS

Published in the interest
of the best
in the religious, social, and economic phases
of Mennonite culture

IN THIS ISSUE

This issue is primarily devoted to Menno Simons (1496-1561), who died January 31, 1561. Church leaders and interested readers will find in this issue much basic information on Menno's life, beliefs, activities, and problems and significance for the Mennonite brotherhood the world over. To each of these phases, articles have been devoted. On pages 21-28 the reader will find a pictorial story of the life and activities of Menno. On the inside back cover we present a more complete list of books and articles found in bookstores and libraries. During this commemorative year you should take the opportunity to become better acquainted with one of the outstanding leaders of the Mennonites.

INDEX 1956 - 60

This issue of MENNONITE LIFE contains (39-48) the Index for the years 1956-60. The Index for the first ten years (1946-55) can be found in the January 1956 issue.

THE NEXT ISSUE

The April issue will be devoted to all Mennonite missions in Africa. Never before has this subject been treated in detail and never before has this been as timely as today. Mission societies and all mission-minded Christians will be interested in this issue. Spread the information about these two issues among your friends. Write us about information concerning reduced rates on larger orders.

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MENNONITE LIFE
North Newton, Kansas

COVER:

New Menno Memorial Church, Witmarsum, The Netherlands. For old Menno Simons Church see back cover.

Photo, Peter Kuiper.

MENNONITE LIFE

An Illustrated Quarterly

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Vol. XVI JANUARY, 1961 No. 1

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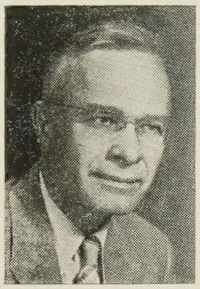
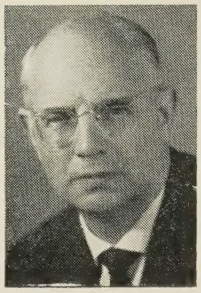
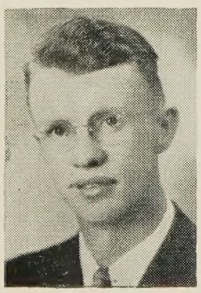
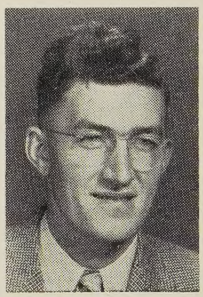
Contributors in This Issue

(From left to right)

CORNELIUS KRAHN has done research pertaining to Menno Simons at the Universities of Amsterdam and Heidelberg (p. 3).
OTTO REGIER of Bad Segeberg near Oldesloe, Germany, is vitally interested in preserving the Menno Markers of that area (p. 7).
WALTER QUIRING, editor of "Der Bote," Rosthern, Sask., recently visited British Honduras to study Mennonite settlements (p. 10).
ANNA MARIE PETERSON, senior at Bethel College from Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, attended Spelman College for Negro women (p. 14).





ARNOLD REGIER, chaplain of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton, lectures on the subject on which he writes (p. 16).
ELAINE SOMMERS RICH, member of the Creative Writers Club (Newton, Kan.), is a regular contributor to Menn. publications (p. 19.)
WILLIAM E. KEENEY recently received his Ph.D. degree at Hartford Theological Sem. based on research on Dutch Anabaptists (p. 29).
HENRY POETTCKER, president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, is writing a dissertation dealing with Menno Simons (p. 33).

NOT SHOWN

LEO LAURENSE, pastor of the Witmarsum Mennonite Church, supervised the construction of the new church (see cover) (p. 6).
KARSTEN KÖHLER was representative of the German Student Organization at the time when he gave his address in 1958 (p. 8).
JAN A. BRANDSMA, Baptist minister of the Netherlands, is doing research pertaining to Menno Simons and Dutch Mennonites (p. 9).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Photographs, pp. 12-13, Walter Quiring; Chart and map, pp. 17, 24, John Hiebert; Photographs, p. 17, Marvin Ewert; Photograph, p. 18, "Christian Living"; Photographs and etchings pp. 21-28, Bethel College Historical Library, Leo Laurense, Jan A. Brandsma, G. Kaffke, Otto Regier, P. J. Dyck.

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At the 400th Anniversary of Menno's Death

Menno Simons and the Mennonite World Brotherhood

By CORNELIUS KRAHN

MENNO SIMONS was born in Friesland, and died in what was then Denmark. He was a refugee who, for many years, could not find a place of residence even for half a year. Recent decades led us to understand and appreciate more than ever before what it means to be a displaced person.

The disappearance from the marker where Menno had been buried at Wüstenfelde of the well-known copper plaque portraying Menno holding the Bible in his hands was considered a serious loss. In 1958 representatives of the student body of the University of Kiel came and attached a new bronze plaque to the shaft. Speaking not only for the students of the University of Kiel, but for all of West Germany, the representative stated that this was done to express gratitude for the works of love done by the Mennonites, who bear the name of Menno Simons. When the students all over Germany literally had no shelter, no clothes, no food, no facilities, no hope, Mennonites from other countries came to help them and thus kindled hope and courage in their hearts. To honor the memory and the spirit of Menno, a refugee for the sake of Christ, they attached a new plaque to the marker which had been desecrated after the war. This was indeed symbolic of turning the sword into a plowshare. We could become oratorical in stating that the spirit of Menno is still living.

Menno, The Frisian

Menno Simons was born a Frisian and Netherlander. He had to leave his native country as a refugee at the time when he stepped into the limelight of history. Only for short and secret visits could he come back to his native land. Menno, like all true apostles and evangelists, had such a compelling message burning in his heart that he could not compromise and be silent in order that he might remain in his native country. Since he could not preach openly from his pulpit in Witmarsum, he left his home and went abroad. The newly founded brotherhood centered around the core of the Christian message became for him more important than the home community and blood ties. He was willing to sacrifice all that had been valuable and dear to him for the new community of saints and a world brotherhood. Not that he did not love his people, his country and his native village. On the contrary, but circumstances forced him to exchange the inherited community of blood ties for a community of people whose ties were of an other-worldly nature. As a shepherd of believers scattered from Amsterdam to Danzig and Emden to Strasbourg, he became in his day a forerunner of the spirit of ecumenicity and of a Christianity not confined to geographic and national boundaries.

Menno was a voluminous writer, and yet we have no line from him in his native Frisian language. Even his first Dutch writing soon had to be adjusted linguistically to the new environment in which he lived in order to present his message successfully. When we make a pilgrimage today from Amsterdam via Friesland to Groningen and Emden and stop in Oldersum where he found temporary shelter and recall all the hardships recorded, one is impressed by this unusual record. The last remnant and marker of the castle of Ulrich van Dornum at Oldersum which sheltered Melchior Hoffman, Karlstadt, and Menno was torn down recently, removing one of the last traces of those days. Menno, however, could not spend much time in East Friesland but traveled from place to place and finally found shelter in the province of Holstein which at that time was a part of Denmark. Here he found a home in Wüstenfelde, here he had a printing press, and here he was later buried. (See illustrations.)

Menno, The Leader

Although the Anabaptists of the Low Countries went under many names and nicknames, ultimately the name "Mennisten," officially first recorded in East Friesland in 1545, became the most common among them. It is true that the Anabaptists had no outstanding personality towering over all others similar to Luther, Zwingli or Calvin. This was likely due to a number of factors. There was none of equal stature. There was also none who found full approval by civil and political authorities. Severe persecution also prevented the appearance of such leadership in the refugee congregations. In addition we must also be aware of the fact that the merging congregational type of church polity among the Anabaptists was not conducive to singling out leaders for commanding positions. In spite of all these factors, we must point out that the name of Menno not only became attached to the brotherhood he served in the Low Countries, but has also become known all over the world.

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Nevertheless Menno was neither the founder of the movement, which was named after him, nor its only outstanding leader. His influence in Switzerland, where the movement started, was insignificant. It is only in the range between Strasbourg and Emden where his forerunner, Melchoir Hoffman, was active that his influence was outstanding. Co-workers, such as Dirk Philips, also traveled much and became well known as leaders. Leenaert Bouwens possibly baptized more persons and certainly traveled just as extensively as Menno. Intellectually, others such as Adam Pastor and Obbe Philips may have surpassed him. Nevertheless, there is something about Menno which gives him the qualities looked for in an outstanding leader which the others did not have to the same degree. Obbe Philips, one of the earliest leaders, withdrew from the movement. His brother, Dirk, did not have the grace of love and tolerance to the degree which Menno possessed this gift. Leenaert Bouwens not only lacked these same qualities, but he came on the scene too late to make the same impact Menno did.

Menno's Significance

Already from the Catholic pulpit Menno secretly and openly preached and promoted the Anabaptist cause. But his significance as a leader during his lifetime lies in the fearless and courageous stand he took once he had decided to join the persecuted minority of persons who were ready to give their lives for the cause of the Lord. He furnished this leadership in the most crucial hour of Anabaptism. The radical wing had been crushed and deprived of its leadership. The peaceful remnant living underground was like a herd of sheep without a shepherd. His bold action gave it courage and made its survival possible.

The question as to whether the movement would have survived without Menno will not necessarily find a unanimous answer by all scholars. There is a possibility that under other leadership the movement could have survived not so very differently from the development it took under the guidance of Menno and his associates. However, under the predominant influence of Dirk Philips and Leenaert Bouwens, the course would have been different and not necessarily better. Menno's gentle hand and courageous stand helped those in hiding to come forward and encouraged many of those misled by the radical leaders to return to the peaceful wing of Anabaptism and prevented the disintegrating influence of too rigid discipline.

The theological views of Anabaptism pertaining to Christ, the Bible, the church, the world, eschatology and martyrdom were to some extent shaped before Menno's conversion and were unique enough to mold the believers from Amsterdam to Danzig and from Emden along the Lower Rhine River into a brotherhood of like-minded Christians. However, through his writings and his tireless traveling, Menno helped considerably in this process. The significance attached to his person and his writings by the authorities engaged in the suppression of Anabaptism make this point very clear.

In passing we like to point out that the name for the Anabaptist movement in the Low Countries, which originally was predominantly "Mennisten," was dropped in later centuries. In Switzerland the name was never used to a large extent, which is understandable. *Doopsgezinden* in the Netherlands and *Taufgesinnte* in Switzerland became the most commonly used names in these two countries. Thus, in the countries in which Anabaptism originated, particularly in the country which gave us Menno, his name is at present not attached to the movement, while in the rest of the world the descendants of the Anabaptists are known as "Mennonites." In Danzig, Prussia and Poland where Menno Simons and Dirk Philips established the first congregations they were soon known as "Mennonites." From here they spread to Russia and North and South America under this name. Swiss Anabaptists in France, Germany and Austria also became known as Mennonites and their descendants in North America are known only under this name. By now there is a total of nineteen countries into which Mennonites have spread and in most of them they are referred to under this name. The latest country added to the list of those into which Mennonites have moved in their constant search is British Honduras.

Menno's Writings

It has been pointed out that Menno's significance lies in the fact that he was a courageous leader, a traveling messenger and a writer. The writings of Menno were among the most significant reasons which contributed to the survival and spread of the Anabaptists during the sixteenth century. Not only did these writings play a significant role among the Anabaptists of Dutch background but also among those of the Swiss heritage. This may be a partial answer to the question how it happened that those from Switzerland moving to other countries also became known under the name "Mennonites." They relied heavily on the writings of Menno and other Dutch authors. The *Foundation Book* of Menno appeared in the critical moment and became a most significant guide for Christian living. Menno's complete writings have appeared in the Dutch, German, and English languages and some parts have been translated into other languages. To date the writings of no other Anabaptist leader have been distributed and read as widely as those of Menno. However, we can well ask the question, who reads Menno's writings today unless it is for purposes of research? Hardly anybody in Europe reads Menno otherwise and even the latest American edition of his writings is probably more a matter of decorum on the bookshelf than a book that is read. The same can possibly also be said about the biographies of Menno, although no other Men-

nonite leader has had as many biographies written about him as he.

Menno Today

What Menno really means to the Mennonite world brotherhood today is possibly more of a symbolic nature and a matter of interpretation or conjecture. At times he may get too much credit and at times not enough, depending on what we think he stood for or promoted. We may praise, judge and evaluate him by the standards of our later heritage and our attitude toward the same. Non-Mennonites living in the vicinity of Mennonites will see Menno in the mirror of those named after him. If they have a good impression of them, Menno will be given much praise. This was the case when the representatives of the German students honored his memory. When contemporary Mennonites make a poor impression, Menno's evaluation and appreciation will go down. This yardstick is not confined to non-Mennonites living in non-Mennonite communities but is also used among Mennonites themselves since so little is known about centuries past and the basic beliefs of our forefathers.

For some Menno is a great champion of religious liberty and the freedom of the individual conscience. We must say that he very definitely was this. For others he was a Bible-centered Christian. He definitely placed Christ in the center of the Bible and interpreted it on the basis of the well-known passage from I Corinthians 1:13. For others he may appear as a Biblical legalist and literalist, and there is some truth in that, particularly looking at some of the followers named after him. Again, for others he was a man who strongly emphasized the close tie between faith and the fruits of faith. This is definitely a concern of Menno. For others again he had a unique concept of the church and the Christian brotherhood, and who can deny this fact?

So we could continue enumerating Menno's unique contributions. Menno, and to a large extent, the early Anabaptists, had these concerns and emphases. Some were more developed than others. This depended somewhat on the challenges which developed within and outside of the group. Today in retrospect we must aim to balance these emphases taking into consideration the heritage of our forefathers and above all the Bible and the challenge of our day.

We have referred to the fact that the nineteenth country has been added to those to which Mennonites have migrated mostly for religious reasons. This is evidence that the spirit of Menno and the martyrs has not completely died out. Some are still willing to leave relatives, home and property and move into unknown countries for the sake of religious freedom. It is true, only very few Mennonites of our day express their loyalty to Christ and their heritage in this way. Most of the contemporary Mennonites consider this a misinterpretation of the basic Christian responsibilities.

We today emphasize strongly that a Christian must witness for Christ and practice discipleship in the environment in which he lives. He must make his heritage meaningful to himself and his environment by meeting the challenge of the day in all areas of life. It is considered more challenging, more meaningful and more Christian to do this than to escape from life in a "monastic" way as this has been done by Mennonites in centuries past. In both of these traditions we can claim a heritage of Menno. He did leave his country, but he never lived to see the day when belief and practices for which he labored became petrified and when his followers were to persist in a blind zeal to preserve dead forms. He was ready and willing to discuss basic issues with representatives of the group he served, as well as with the Reformed, the Lutherans, the Catholics, and the representatives of governments. He kept channels of conversation and communication open.

We need, in our day, a revival of the unique concept of the brotherhood or church, and the concept of discipleship which was born in the days of Menno. We are in need of fitting these into our day and age and making them meaningful. More than ever before we need disciples of Christ working in small cells and groups sensitive to the needs of the hour in the realm of the religious life, that is, that fallen man must be reconciled to God, and in the sphere of the social life, that is that man must be a brother to man, and the further implications contained in these two basic concepts.

Menno in This Issue

This issue is largely devoted to Menno Simons, in view of the fact that January 31 is the day on which he died 400 years ago. The first article in this issue summarizes Menno's significance as a leader of the believers who were ultimately named after him (p. 3). Leo Laurense, pastor of the Witmarsum Mennonite Church, presents the village of Witmarsum in which Menno Simons was born in 1496 and converted in 1536 (p. 6). Otto Regier describes the place where Menno lived and died (p. 7), while Karsten Köhler tells what the relief work of the American Mennonites meant to the starving students after World War II (p.8). A pictorial story relates the life and work of Menno Simons, showing illustrations from Witmarsum, East Friesland and Holstein where Menno resided (pp. 21-29). William E. Keeney and Henry Poettcker discuss some theological aspects of the writings of Menno Simons (pp. 29-39).

A special Menno Simons commemoration will take place in the Bethel College Mennonite Church on January 29-31. A similar commemoration will take place during the same days in Amsterdam and Witmarsum, The Netherlands.

Pilgrimage to Witmarsum

From Days of Menno to the Present

By LEO LAURENSE

IN 1535 the village church of Witmarsum, Friesland, was crowded every Sunday. Even from the surrounding villages people came to hear the parish priest, Menno Simons. They admired him as an "evangelical" preacher, although he was still serving in his Catholic Church. However, there were already a number of church members who refused to attend the Catholic worship service. They preferred private Bible studies where they aimed to worship God in spirit and in truth. For this purpose they met secretly in private homes, in barns, and in out-of-the-way places. They considered themselves the true church, the brotherhood of believers and reborn children of God.

This was the origin of the Mennonite church of Witmarsum. The danger of persecution, imprisonment and death prevented the brethren from keeping any records and, therefore, nothing concrete is really known about the first century of the congregation.

Menno was in touch with this group from the beginning and did not report them to the government. He himself was almost fully convinced that he should be on their side and not in the church which was so closely associated with the government, but it was hard for him to give up everything for Christ.

However, in January 1536 Menno left the Catholic Church and joined this little flock. Naturally he could not stay in that community but had to go where he was not known. As the Reformation spread in the Netherlands, the Catholic Church disappeared and the Reformed Church was established as the state church. Although other denominations were forbidden, the little group of brethren survived in Witmarsum. They even dared to organize a church and remodel a home into a plain meetinghouse one mile east of the village. According to an old tradition, Menno is supposed to have preached in this home for some time. It is unlikely that this is true. Because of the severe persecution, Menno Simons, who had left the Catholic Church, could not have preached here without being imprisoned. Nevertheless, this meetinghouse was referred to as Menno Simons' *Preekhuis* (place of preaching). From an old picture we know what the style of meetinghouses was at that time. In front, next to a little pulpit, we see a bench for the ministers and deacons. The men sat on benches along the wall and the women sat in the center of the room.

The Mennonites of the Netherlands commemorated Menno Simons for the first time in 1835. The Mennonites of Witmarsum had gone through hard times. Nevertheless, with the help of others, spiritually and financially the fellowship remained alive. The old dilapidated church was remodeled. A more church-like building with modern windows and even a little steeple on the roof was erected on the old foundation. At the entrance of the building an inscription stated that Menno Simons was supposed to have preached here to his first followers. Inside a portrait of Menno Simons was found. Such was the situation since 1828.

The next Menno Simons commemoration took place in 1936. During this second Mennonite World Conference, Mennonites from all over the world came to Witmarsum. The old Menno Simons' church was gone and a new church had been erected. The people had grown tired of walking a mile through the fields to the old church. So it was decided that a new church was to be erected in Witmarsum in 1877.

What should happen to the old memorable Menno Simons church? Some thought it should remain a Mennonite monument. The majority was opposed to this plan. The church was torn down and a simple stone monument was erected in its place. Generations of Mennonites came to see this monument with its inscriptions, including "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). This monument was erected in 1879, surrounded by shrubs, ditches filled with water, pastures and fields of waving grain. Whoever visits this spot and listens carefully will be reminded of the "faith of our fathers living still . . . we will be true to Thee till death."

What do we find in Witmarsum now, in January 1961, 425 years after the conversion of Menno? There is still the monument in the fields. The village again has a new Mennonite church. The one erected during the nineteenth century could no longer serve the congregation nor was it a worthy place for visitors. The front is more or less in the pattern of the old Menno Simons church in the field. The inside is a pleasant place for the worship of the local congregation. The visitors from other places and countries have been kept in mind. A Mennonite exhibition is on display telling the story of the Mennonites of the past and present. It is to be a church for the whole Mennonite brotherhood everywhere. This new building was erected through gifts from Mennonites the world over. Mennonite voluntary service workers from everywhere helped in the project during the summer of 1960. The church will be dedicated on January 31, 1961. It is to serve the God of our fathers, the "help in ages past" built on the foundation, Jesus Christ, through the working power of the Holy Spirit.

Where Menno Lived and Died

By OTTO REGIER

BAD Oldesloe, a city of 15,000 inhabitants, is located between Hamburg and Lübeck in northwestern Germany. The northern edge of this town affords a beautiful view. In the distance is a meadow with a huge linden tree in the shade of which stands a small white building with a gray roof. Approaching the tree, it assumes larger proportions. Crossing a little stream, one has reached the Menno-*Kate* and the Menno Linden Tree.

As one reaches the tree, it no longer appears so overwhelming, and one realizes that the house is larger than it appeared from a distance. According to tradition, Menno Simons lived here and printed his books in this house. It is he who planted this linden tree more than four hundred years ago. There is no reason to question the accuracy of the tradition. It is a fact that Menno found shelter on this estate and that he had a print shop. It is also known that an underground Anabaptist printer of Lübeck, after having been discovered, moved to this place. Both this cabin and the linden tree are now monuments protected by the state.

These two items are not the only historical markers in this area as far as the Mennonites are concerned. Next to the building and tree surrounded by trees and shrubs is an area which contains the Menno Simons marker. In the background are fir trees and in front are small markers given by congregations and groups which contributed toward the establishment of this shrine. This is an impressive corner.

Menno-Kate

The white-washed cabin with the thatched roof has a long history. It was erected more than four hundred years ago and has survived the Thirty Years' War and other calamities throughout its long history. The village, Wüstenfelde, in which Menno Simons and his followers lived during the last years of his life, was completely destroyed during the Thirty Years' War.

Nothing else is known about the print shop except that it was used for this purpose during the lifetime of Menno. No records have been preserved of the generations of people who have lived in this house since that time. Today it is occupied by three poor families. By the fall of 1961 this place is to be vacated and the Conference of Mennonites of Germany will take over the building and restore it. After that it will become a monument.

The cabin, covering some thousand square feet, is a rather commodious dwelling. A few steps lead into the hall from which a number of doors lead into the various rooms and a stairway leads to the attic. Through a back door one can enter the old kitchen, which still has a floor made of shallow flagstones picked up in the fields. As in olden times, the house is lit by an old kerosene lamp. The hall and the neighboring room will be equipped with antique furniture and a Mennonite library containing books written by and about Menno. This will become the "Menno Room." In addition to this, visitors will be informed about the immediate environment and the Mennonite congregations of North Germany. The disposition of the rest of the house is still to be determined. To establish a modern dwelling place with electricity and running water would require much money and, in addition to this, would alter the appearance of this old house completely. It would, however, be easy to transform this cabin into a meeting place where people can stay over night. In this case a small modern dwelling would have to be erected near by. These are some plans which could possibly be realized.

The Menno Monument

This monument has been in existence over fifty years and, therefore, we know its history. In 1902 the Conference of the Mennonites of Germany erected a marker at the place Schadhorn at Wüstenfelde where Menno Simons had been buried in his own garden. This marker consisted of a large granite rock placed on a native rock as a foundation. In 1906 the Mennonite Church of Hamburg-Altona contributed a bronze plaque featuring Menno Simons, which was dedicated August 26 of that year.

In view of the fact that it was very difficult to reach this monument when the roads were bad, very few people were able to visit this place. In addition to this, in December 1950 the bronze plaque was stolen. This fact became known to the German Student Organization, members of which had received food from the Mennonites of America immediately after World War II. Looking for a project to express its appreciation, the organization decided to collect funds from students of all West German universities to cast a new bronze plaque of Menno Simons for this marker. The sculptor Küohl fashioned the plaque.

At this time the thought originated to have the marker moved from its solitary spot to the well-known Menno cabin and linden tree. The proprietor, Baron von Jenisch, agreed to contribute a larger plot of ground near the cabin, and have the monument moved. Otto Schowalter of the Mennonite Church of Hamburg-Altona negotiated in this matter. The American PAX boys, together with Otto Regier, Georg Isert, and local agen-

cies all cooperated in the transfer of the marker which was completed in ten days after it had been started on September 23, 1953. The landscaping and planting of trees was completed in 1957 free of charge by the park authority of Bad Oldesloe.

Dedication Service

During the summer of 1957 the sculptor had presented the Menno bronze plaque which was dedicated on November 30, 1958. After some introductory remarks by Otto Schowalter, the mayor of Bad Oldesloe, Barth, stated that the city was interested in keeping the memory of Menno Simons alive as part of its history. After this the student representing the University of Kiel and his associates expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Mennonites for the help which the German student body had received after World War II and presented the memorial plaque. (See article in this issue.) Following this the chairman of the *Vereiningung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden,* Abraham Braun, accepted the monument and the memorial plaque for the Conference.

Near the site of the former marker an unnamed donor had another simple marker erected in 1957, so that the memory of the final place of labor and burial of Menno Simons would remain alive.

At last we have the monument, the Menno Simons' cabin and linden tree together as a beautiful memorial. Representatives of the Mennonite congregations of Hamburg-Altona, Lübeck and Kiel have organized a Board to administer this memorial. The wish has been expressed that the Mennonites of Germany will establish a foundation when they commemorate the Quadricentennial of the death of Menno Simons on January 31, 1961. The income from this foundation would be used to take care of this place. Mennonites the world over will be given opportunity to contribute to this cause.

It is inspiring to note that the public high school of Bad Oldesloe has included information about Menno Simons in its history course and has included four pages of outline to him. This should inspire us Mennonites everywhere to cultivate the memory of Menno Simons after whom we are named. This memorial is not meant to give undue honor to a human being. Our concern is expressed in the following words:

"All this is done not so much because of the person, Menno Simons, but in order to prevent the loss of his contribution as time goes on. His thoughts and ideals should spread so that help for those in need, the poor and the starving, will not decrease but rather continue and multiply."

I would like to conlude: may the living church of Christ as Menno Simons conceived it and which he strove to realize grow and spread in our day and age.

An Expression of Gratitude

At the Dedication of the Menno Marker

By KARSTEN KÖHLER

Dear Friends:

We have gathered here at this venerated place for a quiet hour—an hour which is impressive as an occasion for thankfulness and thoughtfulness. We are moved to thankfulness for a deed which has been recorded in the history of the German universities and reflection on the man in whose spirit this deed was performed.

When World War II came to a close and people returned from the front with great losses, they came to the destroyed West German cities to build up new communities. At that time a new generation of students entered the universities in order to prepare for the reconstruction of their country. Universities also suffered greatly under the circumstances of that disturbed time. Buildings were gone, auditoriums were bombed out, all facilities for instruction had gone up in smoke, and those who were to teach had lost their lives in the war. The students experienced difficult times. They found no satisfactory shelter; they slept on straw. They were happy when they were able to get a uniform. There was a great scarcity of all necessities of life, including food. Nevertheless, somehow they had to move on and up; and go on they did. A welcome help at this moment was the aid given by the Mennonites of America "in the name of Christ." Through this channel a food program for students at German universities was inaugurated.

With this external help came internal help. This deed gave that generation of students the awareness that there were still human beings who recognized the need of others and who were willing to help. New courage, new hope, strength and self assurance were generated.

For this deed of Christain help I am today privileged to express our thanks. How does it happen that a young student stands here to express this gratitude—one who was not a student at that time and did not experience these hardships at the university?

Every generation of students is a link in the chain binding the university in a firm bond. We today feel the common bond with the students who suffered after the war. This will continue, and so I am standing here before you to express appreciation in the name of those who received help from the Mennonites.

That we students from the University of Kiel have come here does not mean that only students from our university have received help through the Mennonites. Help

came to all students of West German universities and, therefore, it is my pleasant task to thank you in the name of all students of Germany.

I can assure you for all that your deed will not be forgotten. It was an example for us as to how to deal when one sees a fellow human being suffer. It seems to me we can extend sincere thanks only if we also commit ourselves to a promise. This promise is that we must help wherever the wounds of war have not yet been healed, wherever students are in need. This promise is our thank you. We must take care that this will not be words only but will become deeds. An expression of appreciation cannot be contained in words. It must become visible and must be felt.

How can I express this gratitude without mentioning the man after whom you are named and who left a heritage which enabled you to do this deed? This man is Menno Simons in whose spirit the Mennonites crossed borders of nations and denominations to help where help was needed. In the name of the German Student Organization (Deutsche Studentenschaft) I am presenting this plaque with the picture of Menno Simons to the Mennonite congregations of Germany (Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden) as the representative of the Mennonites the world over as a token of appreciation.

Thus, this thank you and this commemoration are related. To thank you for the help granted and to honor the memory of a man in whose spirit this was done, I present this plaque. May it adorn this memorial of the Mennonites, and may it remind all people to follow the example of the Mennonite congregations.

(See pp. 27-28.)

Menno Simons as a Frisian

By JAN A. BRANDSMA

MENNO SIMONS was born in the village of Witmarsum in the Dutch province of Friesland. He was a very productive writer. He wrote his first pamphlet in 1535 as a Roman Catholic priest, and his last one in 1559, two years before his death. There are more than forty writings, including letters, devotional, polemical and theological writings and two poems. The last Dutch edition of his writings, *Opera Omnia Theologica,* was published at Amsterdam in 1681.

The writings of Menno Simons are not of great theological and scholarly significance, but they give us an opportunity to get a fairly good view of the conditions in the Low Countries during the time of the Reformation. More significant is the fact that he wrote and presented them at a crucial time and by doing so influenced the religious development of his day. Generations of believers benefitted by these writings and molded their religious lives accordingly.

It is surprising that Menno, who was a Frisian, did not write in his native language. He grew up in the village of Witmarsum between Bolsward and Harlingen, attending a school in which Frisian was spoken, which is very different from the Dutch language spoken in the other provinces of the Netherlands. Frisian shows some similarity with the Scandinavian languages. In those days a priest in Friesland was required not only to speak in the language of the people, that is Frisian, but also to write and preach in this language.

Yet we have nothing that Menno wrote in the Frisian language. In a recent book entitled *Minne Simens en de Minnisten,* M.S.E. Visser states that Menno did not use Frisian because that would imply patriotic love which he considered "worldly." He was primarily interested in religious life, which was not restricted to the Frisians. It is clear that this assumption is wrong. The book by Visser in general shows that he has little understanding of the Anabaptists and Menno Simons.

We must look for other reasons to answer the question why Menno did not use his native language in his writings. Two years after his birth, July 20, 1498, Friesland lost its independence when Duke Albert of Saxony became the ruler. In 1515 his son, Duke George, turned over his rights to Charles V; in 1524 the latter became the emperor of all Germany. Eight years later, in 1524, the Frisians paid homage to the emperor. Consequently, the Frisian language and culture suffered severely. The first book published in Frisian appeared in 1470, and now the Frisian had to make room for the Dutch and French languages. The last known Frisian document of that time is dated 1573.

However, this was possibly not the most important reason why Menno did not use his native tongue in his writings. Immediately after he left the Catholic Church at Witmarsum in 1536, he left the province of Friesland. The tradition that he remained in Witmarsum for a while preaching the Gospel is not based on facts. His life was not safe in Friesland, and he would not have survived if he had stayed. By the end of 1536 he was in Oldersum, near Emden in the German province of East Friesland. He also spent some time in the province of Groningen, returning occasionally to his native village of Witmarsum, Friesland. In December, 1542, there was an imperial edict issued against him in Friesland. From then on he lived primarily in Germany, including such places as Emden, Cologne, Lübeck, Wismar and Wüstenfelde near Oldesloe. He visited his native province of

Friesland only occasionally in brief periods, as in 1549 and again in 1557.

Thus we understand why his writings appear primarily in the Dutch language and not in the Frisian. They were to be read by all Anabaptists of the North Sea and Baltic Coast from Flanders to Danzig. Dutch was understood everywhere in this area. Yet to meet the needs of the population of North Germany, his writings were adapted to the linguistic peculiarities of that territory. Some of his writings appear in the *Oosters* (eastern) dialect. His sentence construction, too, reveals the influence of his German environment.

The contemporary Frisian writer, Jan Piebenga, states in his *Skiednis fan de Fryske Skriftekennissee* (1957) that every Frisian ought to know who Menno Simons was and what he stood for. And yet hardly anybody has attempted to translate Menno's writings into his native Frisian language. In 1930 Sjouke de Zee translated Menno's *Meditation on the 25th Psalm* into Frisian. This he did because he considered this booklet most significant for the knowledge of Menno's personal and spiritual life. He expressed his surprise that a witness like this from the sixteenth century could have been completely lost sight of by the Frisian population.

What is most needed in the Netherlands is a scholarly edition of Menno's writings, which has never been published. After this we will need to translate some selections of the writings of Menno into the Frisian language. The Fryske Akademy of Leeuwarden, established in 1938 and interested in the promotion of Frisian culture and scholarship, is contemplating such an edition of selections from the writings of Menno Simons. Interest in this matter was created through a number of articles in *It Beaken,* the publication of the Akademy. It is hoped that a selection of the writings of Menno Simons in the Frisian language will be forthcoming in the near future.

The Nineteenth Country Added

Mennonites in British Honduras

By WALTER QUIRING

THE world-wide migrations of the Mennonites, which began in Switzerland more than four hundred years ago, have not yet come to a close. Two years ago a group of Mennonties from Mexico added another country, the nineteenth in our history, to those "conquered." The country is British Honduras.

A World-Wide Migration

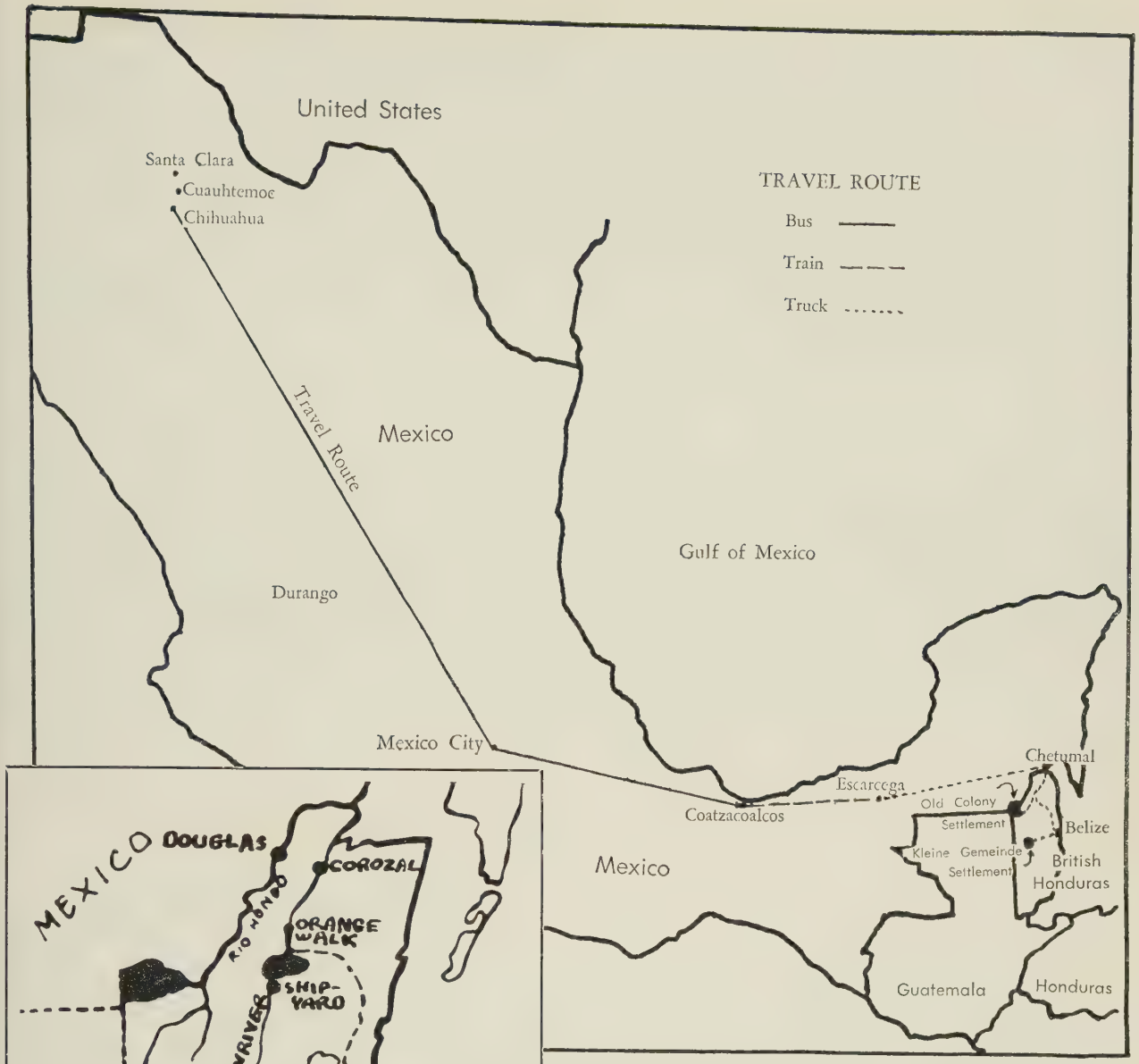
The Swiss Mennonites scattered involuntarily into Southern Germany during the sixteenth century. Although many moved on from here, most of them remained in Southern Germany. Swiss Mennonites continued their migrations into the nineteenth century. However, the "world-wide wanderers" among the Mennonites were those of Dutch background. Of necessity the first ones moved from the Low Countries eastward during the sixteenth century. Following the Baltic Coast, they settled in Poland and Danzig. Later they migrated to Russia, the United States and Canada. They also found new homes in Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil. From Paraguay some moved to Bolivia.

Meanwhile, some Mennonites from Russia residing in Canada have migrated to Mexico and Paraguay, while some Prussian Mennonites have gone to Uruguay. Thus, Mennonites are found in the following nineteen countries: Switzerland, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, the United States, Canada, Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay, Mexico, and British Honduras. (This does not include individuals and smaller groups who have moved to many other countries, including Palestine and Australia.) That is an unusual record and must be taken into consideration when we encounter the many unique characteristics and features of our Mennonite heritage the world over.

Why did the Mennonites of Mexico choose to go to the sub-tropical British Honduras to start a new settlement? First, there was a scarcity of land in Mexico, which made it difficult to find homes for the large Mennonite families. In addition to this, Protestant north European settlers in the Spanish-Catholic country find the adjustment difficult. The bureaucracy and the business practices of this environment remain strange to them. An additional reason was the social security law of the Mexican government, which the Mennonites feared because it could limit their freedom.

Investigating British Honduras

Recently delegates were sent to British Honduras. Among other things they reported that this country was an English colony, with a population of only 85,000 and an area consisting of 8,900 square miles. The majority of the population consisted of Negroes, mulattoes and Indians. They found the land near the coast and the capital, Belize, unsuited for settlement, but west of Belize and Hondo it was fertile and covered with forests. The



(Top) Map showing the travel route of the Old Colony Mennonites from their settlements in Mexico via Mexico City to the new settlements in British Honduras. (Below) Map showing the new Mennonite settlements in British Honduras.

climate is sub-tropical, and along the coast humid with high temperatures. The annual rainfall averages between 50 and 175 inches in the south.

The delegates found no markets for agricultural products. The capital, Belize, has only 27,000 inhabitants, while Corozal has 2,500; Orange Walk has 1,500; Cayo, 1,600; Ponte Corda, 1,400. These are the only cities of the country and are already provided for by the native farmers.

They also encountered difficulties pertaining to drinking water. They saw cisterns in all cities, which they considered an indication that the well water was no good.

These reports were given at the meetings in the villages. They weighed all reasons for and against a migra-

Pictures showing the primeval forest in which the Mennonites from Mexico are settling in British Honduras. Primitive means of transportation and mud roads through the forest are shown.

tion to British Honduras, with the result that some decided to migrate. Soon two groups were preparing for the trip. They were members of the Evangelical Mennonite Church (Kleine Gemeinde) of the *Quellenkolonie* of the state of Chihuahua and of the Old Colony Mennonites of the three settlements of the Manitoba Plan, Swift Current Plan, and North Plan of Chihuahua and also of the Patos settlement in the state of Durango.

The Kleine Gemeinde bought 18,724 acres of land sixty-five miles west of the capital, Belize, and west of the river by the same name near the border of Guatemala near the city of Cayo for 100,000 British Honduras dollars (1 U.S. dollar equals 1.40 B.H. dollar). They established the settlement of Spanish Lookout with three villages: Gnadenfeld, Grünfeld, and Rosenhof. Early in 1960 this settlement consisted of sixty families with 471 persons.

The Old Colony Mennonites settled at two places farther north. One settlement named Blue Creek originated near Rio Hondo near the border of Mexico and Guatemala. It consists of 115,000 acres bought for 310,000 U.S. dollars. Early in 1960 the population included 565 persons located in five villages: Reinland, Neuendorf, Gnadental, Gnadenfeld and Neuhorst.

The largest Mennonite settlement of British Honduras is Shipyard, some fifteen miles south of Orange Walk. It consists of 105 families with 728 persons on 17,083 acres of land bought for 51,249 B.H. dollars. The settlement consists of nine villages: Schöndorf, Blumental, Rosenfeld, Blumenort, Reinfeld, Reinland, Blumenfeld, Hochfeld and Kronstal.

The Mennonites from Mexico had established sixteen villages with a population of 1,764 in three settlements during the first part of 1960. However, this figure has since fluctuated constantly because of the uninterrupted flow of newcomers and the return of those who are disappointed.

Establishing New Homes

The first task of the pioneers was to cut down the trees on their land. Room had to be made to establish palm-leaf huts and strips had to be cut through the thick forest to survey and divide the land. The cut trees were left for a number of months so that they would dry and could be burned. The rest were removed by bulldozers.

Unfortunately, the Old Colony Mennonites arrived during the rainy season. They put up their tents near the river, which, because of the continuous rain, led to sickness and discouragement. Sixty families of the Blue Creek and thirty of the Shipyard settlements returned to Mexico.

The change of climate did not seem to cause any great difficulties with the exception that wounds seemed to appear on the legs as the result of the new environment. What effect the humidity will have is hard to predict.

Regarding the tilling of the soil, there are few problems since the settlers are all expert farmers. The average rainfall of eighty inches should be sufficient for abundant crops. The soil of the Spanish Lookout settlement contains some saltpeter, while the soil of the Blue Creek settlement contains lime. However, the growth of vegetation is good.

The problem of drinking water was a difficult one from

Old Colony Mennonites and members of the Kleine Gemeinde are establishing homes in the primeval forest, in British Honduras. They have to cut down the trees, find suitable lumber for their homes, and construct them under great hardships. That they have made great progress in a few years is shown on these pages.

the first day after their arrival. Although they have drilled wells up to 300 feet, neither Spanish Lookout nor Blue Creek have found desirable water. The situation in Shipyard is much better. At a number of places, they have found good water in shallow wells. The first two settlements are establishing cisterns and using rain water. They plan to return to the practice of digging holes into the ground in their yards, in which they gather and keep the rain water similar to their practice in Manitoba.

There is no question but that tropical fruits—oranges, grapefruits, lemons, peaches, figs and bananas—can easily be grown. It is not likely that apples, pears and prunes can be raised. The main crops, as far as it can be determined at this time, will be sugar cane, peanuts, maize, beans and manioc. Vegetables grow, but only in the winter time.

Ants so feared in the Chaco as a pest also appear in this territory but not in such large numbers as in Paraguay. If they are combated in an early stage, they are not a severe threat. Wild pigeons, parrots and starlings are domestic here, but they do not appear in such large numbers as in the Chaco. Among the wild beasts are the jaguar, puma, ocelot, fox and wild boars, as well as snakes and scorpions

Markets

A special problem is the marketing of the products. For the time being, the few cities of the countries may be able to consume the products of the settlers. After a few years, when the agricultural output will reach its normal level, the market for the products will be too small. Spanish Lookout, which started with chickens, has already saturated the market in Belize.

The settlers are considering the production of sugar because sugar cane can be easily raised. Perhaps some of the lumber can be used. All of these problems will have to be solved in the near future. Whoever is acquainted with these pioneering farmers will know that they will not be discouraged by the first difficulties that they encounter, and that they will solve the problems satisfactorily.

Schools

The Mennonite schools of British Honduras are very different from those in Canada. None of the teachers has received special training for his job. They are farmers and teachers. The farmers of Spanish Lookout (Kleine Gemeinde) are less conservative than the Old Colony Mennonites. They aim to employ the promising younger farmers who show inclination and interest as teachers.

The impression one gets in visiting the three settlements is positive and encouraging. The quality of these experienced pioneers guarantees that they will make every effort to succeed and create a new home for their children and grandchildren.

More difficult than the solution of the economic problem seems the overcoming of the spiritual stagnation of the community. This will hardly be possible without a basic change and improvement of the school system.

The Mennonite Central Committee has purchased a big house in Belize as a center for all the Mennonites of the three settlements where they will be able to find help. It is hoped that eventually some help will come to their schools from this center. That the Mennonites of North America feel a continuing sense of responsibility toward their brethren in British Honduras, not only when they are in need of material goods, is self-evident.

"I Will Die for the South"

I Attended a School for Negro Women

By ANNA MARIE PETERSON

"I WILL DIE FOR THE SOUTH!" These words were spoken by a Southern white young lady attending an elite girls' school in Atlanta, Georgia. They were spoken in a harsh and determined manner to five white students who were also enrolled in an elite women's college in Atlanta (Spelman College, the nation's leading Negro women's college). The young ladies she was addressing were exchange students from three colleges in the midwest. I was one of them. She wanted us to know she was proud of the South, Georgia and Atlanta. She did not want to know that things are changing.

"You can always tell a Spelman girl," people for years have stated. The young ladies knew how to walk properly, speak correctly; they were conscientious and thoughtful ; they had all of the social graces of a finishing school. The Spelman girl knew where she could go and where she could not go. It made white Atlanta very proud that the nice young Negro college girls were staying in their place.

Events are fast changing this idea, however—events new and awakening. On March 9, 1960, there appeared as a full page ad in the Atlanta *Constitution,* a document entitled "An Appeal for Human Rights." Written by leaders from the six colleges in the University Center,* it declared to the people of the city, the country, and the world the grievances in areas of housing, education, jobs, law enforcement, etc. for which they will fight for equal rights. Every method except violence will be used to end

segregation, it stated.

Six days later, several hundred students staged a most carefully planned sitdown demonstration in ten different eating places, including a restaurant in the state capitol building. Of seventy-seven students arrested fourteen were Spelmanites—one a roommate of an exchange student, others friends and hallmates. Today they are facing charges of breaching the peace, intimidating restaurant operators and refusing to leave the premises—the penalties could add up to $6,000 in fines and nine years in prison.

By now the new spirit of the South is prevalent in the hearts and minds of not only the students but families, relatives, and the community as a whole.

Then came the beginning of student picketing of the Atlantic and Pacific Grocery store in downtown Atlanta. Day after day students gave their time willingly between classes and work, to walk back and forth in front of the grocery store with signs which said in essence, "Do not buy here until Negro help will be hired."

The picketing had been going on for a week before Martha, the other Bethel exchange student, and I had our turn. It was by now an established fact that the trade within this short period of time had been cut sharply. (It was estimated by some that trade dropped from 500 to 40 customers a day.) Although by now picketing was not new, things nevertheless began to happen—traffic suddenly slowed down to a snail's pace, plain-clothes policemen asked us questions from, "What is your name?" to "What is your major in college?" Remarks were heard from car windows such as, "You girls better go home and read your history books." Thank you's were given by people of the community. The picketing today is still a part of the student movement. Perhaps some day Negroes will be hired for positions above that of the janitor.

May 17 was the anniversary of the 1954 Supreme Court decision. For its commemoration over a thousand students lined up by twos to march through down town Atlanta. We walked the mile in silence, side by side. Radio stations stopped their regular programs to describe the black and brown students and give details of the march. Despite the beauty of spring one could not help but see the ugliness of looks and hear words of hatred. The original goal had been the state capitol grounds, but the governer had received word of the march and thus had his capitol grounds guarded with one hundred state troopers armed with billy clubs, guns and tear gas, all of which cost thousands of dollars. While law enforcement officials were guarding, the students ended their march at the Wheat Street Baptist Church where new inspiration was gained through prayer and words from leaders including Martin Luther King Jr. The last song we sang was, "That Old Negro, He Ain't What He Used to Be."

Yes, for years white Atlanta has been proud of the nice young ladies. Now she has had to take a second look!

What a wonderful and enlightening experience it would have been for the young white lady who said, "I will die for the South," to have been part of the Spelman student body, and to have been a part of the new spirit.

I wonder how she would have felt if, after coming out of the dormitory to step into a taxi, she had been refused service in a taxi because of color. Negro taxi drivers are to carry only Negroes, whites only whites.

I wonder how she would have felt to know that some of her friends' brothers and sisters had thirty to forty classmates in a small school room and could only attend half a day in order that more could attend the next half-day. I wonder if she ever noted that in 1958 a total of $31,632,057.18 was spent in the Georgia institutions of higher education for whites only; while in the Georgia Negro state colleges only $2,001,177.06 was spent. This is a difference of $29,630,880.12!

I wonder how she would have felt to have had people stare at a group of college students walking down the street.

It was natural for us to go shopping, but I wonder how she would have felt if, hungry after that shopping, she would have had to wait until we came to a "for colored" restaurant or, if she were thirsty, wait until we came to a "for colored" water fountain.

I wonder how she would have felt not to be able to worship in any church. Our churches, which claim to be the houses of all people, foster segregation of the races to the point of making Sunday the most segregated day of the week.

If only this young lady could have shared in our experiences. How inspiring it would have been for her to have been a part of the Spelman family . . . to have had Josephine Jackson for her roommate . . . to have had a leading Negro sociologist as an instructer in race relations . . . to have sat beside Negro friends in chapel every school morning . . . to have known other Negroes besides the maid in her home. Perhaps then she too would have discovered that a Spelman young lady has all of the social graces of a finishing school despite sit-down demonstrations, picketing, marches for freedom and a new determination to fight for what belongs equally to all. If only she could have felt the new spirit!

Four college young ladies, three from the Deep South and one from Kenya, and a white college professor accompanied me to the train station when it was time to leave for my home in Wayland, Iowa, in May. As we reminisced and said our good-byes time passed very quickly and soon the train was nearly full. I made the comment that it was time for me to go aboard also. Josephine, my roommate, looked at me and then at the yearbook in my hand. "Anna," she said, "if you can't find a seat when you get on the train just open the yearbook. They will all move." The group laughed—my eyes filled with tears.

We pray that some day there will be an understanding —understanding in the mind of the white girl in the

elite girls' school on the opposite side of town— understanding in the minds and hearts of people in Atlanta, Georgia, the South, the United States, and the world.

By living in a real situation, by making my home there, by being a part of it—only then did I really begin to understand. Only then did the term "brotherhood" have a true meaning.

The young white lady also lives in a real situation, she makes her home there, she is a part of it. She needs only to cross the city and from there she will begin to understand. The term "brotherhood" will then have a true meaning for her.

"Brotherhood" has a new meaning for me, it could have for her. Could it also have a new meaning for you?

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*The Atlanta University Center is a group of six privately supported Negro colleges in Atlanta: Spelman College for women, Morehouse College for men, Clark College, Morris Brown College, Atlanta University (graduate school), and the Interdenominational Theological Center.

The Pastoral Ministry to the Sick

By ARNOLD J. REGIER

ILLNESS may often be thought of as an impairment of the wholeness of a person which hinders his strength and development. A person who is sick sometimes finds that the normal experiences of life cave in on him. Disease accompanied with pain, fear, anxiety, despair and sometimes even an abnormal sense of guilt plague his being to the extent that everything seems to become disorganized.

This feeling was recently expressed by a patient in the following conversation:

Patient: My biggest problem is that I do not trust anyone and I withdraw from everyone. I do not trust my parents who have been so good to me. My employer has even assured me my job but I do not believe him.

Minister: Have you had many disappointments in life? Do you sometimes doubt God?

Patient: There are times when I doubt the very existence of God.

How could He allow this sickness to come upon me? It seems as though I am on a balance between good and evil and I feel that I am on the bad side.

Such expressions of distress remind us of Job. He too felt that the arrows of God had penetrated his soul. He could no longer draw on the strength which he needed in this time of stress. There was a time in his extreme agony that he wished God would destroy him. (6:11-14)

When such a sick person bogs down to the extent that he has to be taken from his home surroundings to a hospital the question arises, "How do we minister to his many needs, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually?" The physician has been consulted and then becomes the captain of the healing team. He directs the procedures needed for a healing process to begin.

The second phase which interests us centers around the Christian minister. How does he fit into this picture? Where will he find time in his busy schedule and in an avalanche of many nursing procedures in the hospital to minister to the spiritual needs of his parishioners? How can he best contribute to the well-being of the patient? These and many other questions enter into a minister's mind as he seeks to help those who have been entrusted to him by his Lord.

The Minister as a Member of the Healing Team

The minister is increasingly being considered as a member of the hospital healing team. Some recent statistics have disclosed that 42 per cent of the people in America go to ministers for professional help and counseling when they face personal problems. This trend cannot be overlooked by other professional groups.

It also causes many ministers to ask for additional clinical training in order to meet these needs. They seek to gain a deeper insight into these inner motivations and tensions. They want to anticipate the spiritual resources which people need to have in order to cope with these personal problems. Most ministers do not only want to improve their pulpit preaching but also seek constantly to improve their pastoral ministry. They want to learn how to cooperate and work with other professional groups in the ministry to the whole man.

The hospital often lends itself very effectively to such a ministry. It is in this setting that the minister, the physican, and the nurse may work as a team to help the patient find himself. The patient under such competent care soon learns to give himself as he really is. He need no longer be ashamed to express his fears, his concerns, his hostilities as well as his failures. The patient soon finds his strength in discussing and thinking through his problems. There is great healing power in sharing one another's concerns.

During the past few years there has been a growing interest among ministers, doctors and nurses to establish closer relationships one with the other and to better understand their respective roles in this ministry. We are learning that it is very difficult to separate man into a threefold being, namely that of the physical, mental and

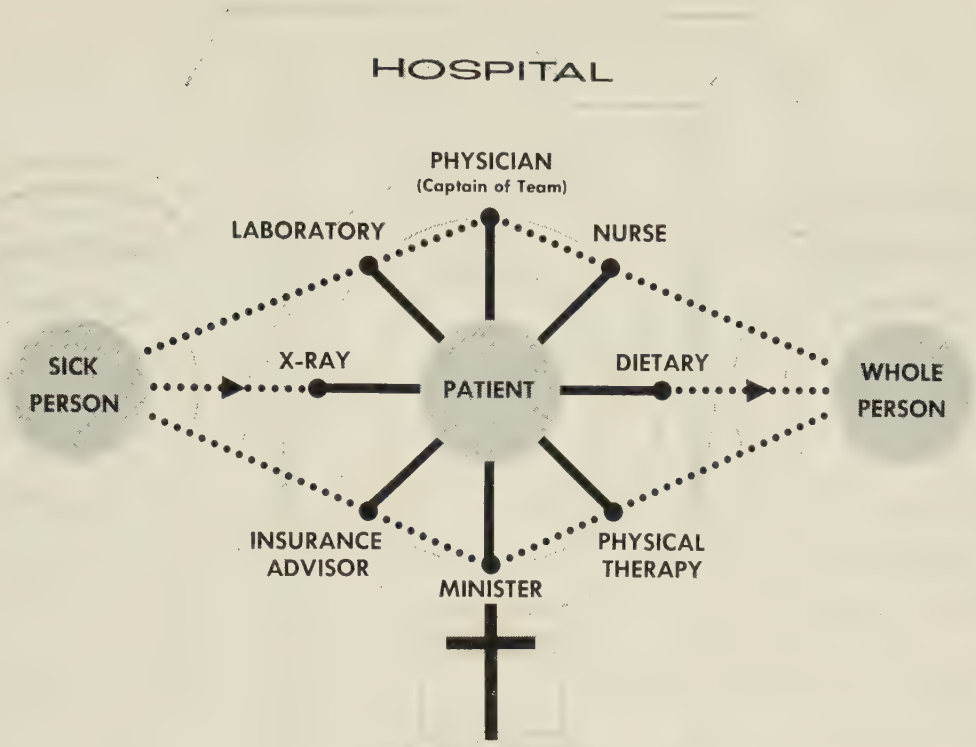
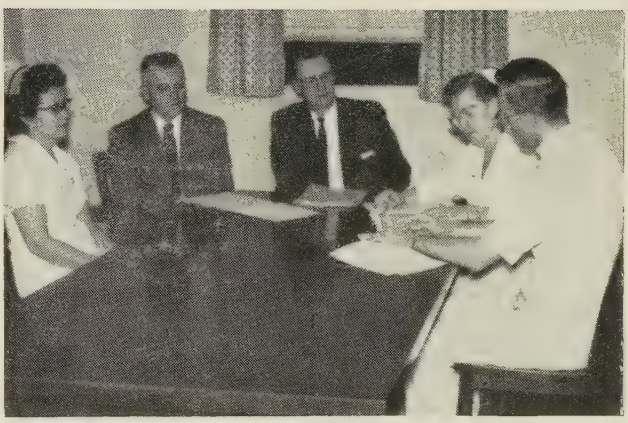


Chart showing relationship of the patient to his family, church and community and the role the ministry and healing staff play in the crucial phase of his life.



(Right) Members of the healing team consulting to insure comprehensive and adequate care for patient in the hospital. Represented are the physician, nursing administration, nursing education and minister. (Below, right) Student nurses learn the fundamentals of good patient care. (Below) The sisters of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital have established and fostered a spiritual ministry throughout the history of the institution.

spiritual functions. All of these are interrelated. Thus it becomes imperative that the different professional groups put aside their old prejudices and together seek more constructive means of ministering to the wholeness of man. It is for this reason that many institutions incorporate a healing team approach. The cooperative effort of the physican, the minister and the nurse is highly desired.

What Does the Patient Anticipate?

In most instances the patient appreciates regular calls by his minister. The frequency of his calls is determined by the condition of the patient. One extended consultation per week is appreciated by most long term patients. More severe illness may demand more frequent calls. Experience is the best teacher in determining the cycle of growth in interpersonal relationships between the pastor and his parishioner.

A patient will often evaluate a pastoral visit by the minister's calm spirit and the quiet manner, rather than by the words which he speaks. That which he has in his heart will reflect more readily in his eyes than in his talk. Job rebuked his consoling friends by saying, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Later when he found his own strength he spoke to God, saying, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee."

A minister may help to foster an inner fortitude and spiritual strength. As he listens to the patient express his concerns and feelings, he enters into them with empathy and understanding. In doing so he helps the patient find his faith in God. Together they may wish to unite their hearts in a period of worship with Scripture reading and prayer. Some ministers at such a time share the Lord's Supper.

The minister's presence is symbolic of that which the patient believes about God. He is one who cares, one who forgives, one who stands by in all circumstances of life. The most frightening experience of a sick person is to be deserted or cast off. Thus a patient's best friend often is the pastor who is not judgmental but one who continues to accept him as a person in times of weakness as well as in times of strength.

A patient was admitted into a local hospital after attempting suicide. She thought it would be the best solution for herself as well as for her family. When the minister came into the room she began to share her feelings quite freely. She concluded by saying, "I guess God would not permit me to run away from my family in this manner." The listening ear of the minister helped her gain this perspective and to find strength for the future battles of life.

Evaluating the Ministry to the Sick

The minister has the model of a Good Shepherd constantly before his eyes. He can anticipate that there are those in his flock who stray and get lost, there are those who may be caught in the thicket of sin, and there are those who get hurt and need healing. If he follows the example of the Good Shepherd, he does not desert them but stands by, cares for them and supports them. He often upholds their arms in prayer.

A minister is available at all times. His telephone may ring any time during the day or night. He is always ready to go to the bedside of one who is in need.

The minister is ready to lend his own self in Christ's stead. He casts off his professional garb and clasps the hand of a fellow-pilgrim who needs strength, mercy and lovingkindness. The minister says in Christ's name, "I love you, I lend myself to you, I wait with you so that I may share your experience."

The minister of the gospel does not regard illness or suffering as an end in itself. He believes that there is a purpose for all experiences of life within the will of God. Where there is pain there is also the possibility of growth. If we remove all possibilities of tragedy there would be no spiritual awareness. Thus the minister enters a sick room with the expectation that there will be growth. The healing process itself often demands a higher level of personal integration. Even faith under such circumstances becomes a medium by which God can get near enough to his child to fulfill His purposes.

In conclusion, the minister may say, "Here is an immortal soul, whose sick body and disturbed mind have defeated him in his life. By giving him love and understanding, and by pointing him to the Great Physician, I will help him find the inner strength which he needs to experience healing, and to sense a deeper harmony with himself, his fellow men, and his God."

Mennonite Medical Association Conference at Camp Luz, Ohio, August, 1960. Arnold Regier spoke on "The Ministry to the Whole Person."

PHYSICIANS-MINISTERS WORKSHOP

The second physicians and ministers clinic is being planned for March 6, in Newton. The ministers of the Newton area and members of the Harvey County Medical Society are co-sponsors of this workshop. Anyone who is interested in participating in it may write to the chairman of the planning committee, Chaplain Arnold J. Regier, Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton, Ks.

Ballad on a Birthday

By ELAINE SOMMERS RICH

When I was a child I lay on the grass
And looked at the great sky dipper.
Philosophy was in my blood
Like salt in the veins of a skipper.

My father worked on a gravel scoop.
My mother baked our bread.
The tall corn grew behind our house
And the maples overhead.

I went to the schools and swallowed books.
I hungered and thirsted for learning.
I set my course by a Morning Star
From which there has been no turning.

I've seen bombed cities and smelled back wards,
A wreckage beyond retrieving.
The evil that lies in the heart of man
Is a wonder past believing.

I married my lover and bore him sons.
Our house is a sturdy shelter.
Each day I deal with the universe
And try to decrease the welter.

Now I have come to my thirtieth year.
Love must be in the living.
Life must be in the giving.
Now I have come to my thirtieth year.

Growing

By ELAINE SOMMERS RICH

The poetry of life moves on apace
from grace to grace.
The stanzas pack more content
in the summer than they
did in spring.
The melody's a symphony,
The thread, a tapestry,
The seed, tall,
The trickling stream, a waterfall.
The heart that once could scarcely
bear a drop of joy
is stout for torrents.
The poetry of life moves on apace
from grace to grace.

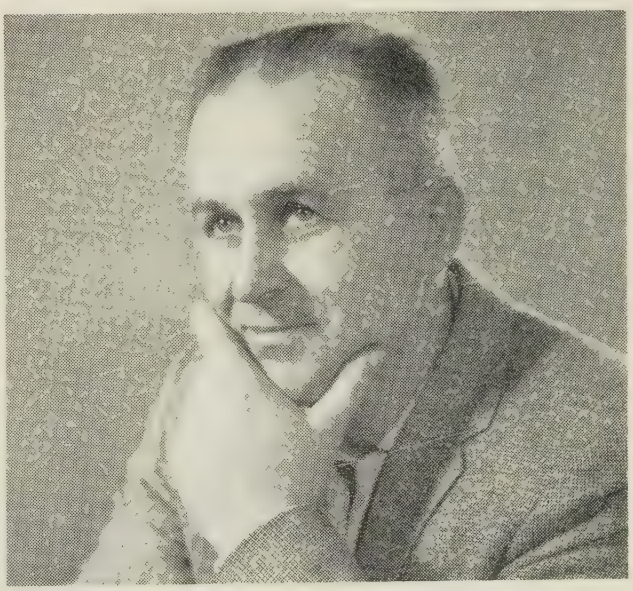
The Thorny Road of a Mennonite Artist

Shoemaker and Artist

HANS JOHANN DYCK grew up along the shores of the romantic Dnepr River of Russia. He was born on April 7, 1921, in the village of Einlage, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Johann M. Dyck.

His father was a well educated and unusually gifted man, graduating from the University of St. Petersburg with high distinction and receiving a golden medal. After teaching history and geography at a secondary school, he accepted a responsible position in 1905 in the Central Russian Bank of Ekaterinoslav. Later he and his brother established a saw mill on the Dnepr River near Chortitza. During the Russian Revolution they lost everything. Later he worked at various places, and in 1936 was exiled to Siberia where he perished.

It was his father's desire that he should get a good education. In early childhood Hans showed great interest in painting. The parental home had many drawings and paintings, including those of the well-known Mennonite artist, Daniel Wohlgemuth. Hans often admired these works of art. He received his first instruction from his father. In spite of the fact that there was the



Hans Johann Dyck, whose life story is related on these pages.

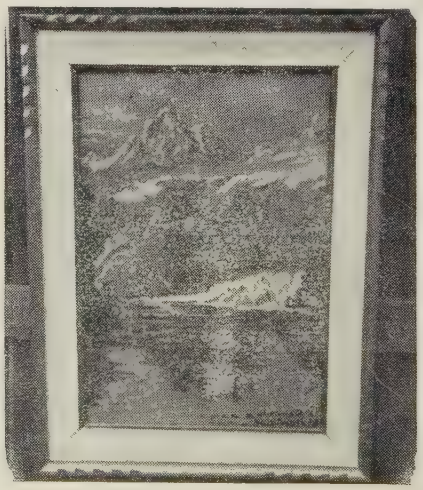
After the Russian Revolution, Hans J. Dyck became interested in art. In times of hardship he concentrated on the portrayal of nature and peaceful landscapes, of which these reproductions are samples. Inquiries pertaining to the purchase of the original works of art can be directed to MENNONITE LIFE, North Newton, Kansas.

greatest scarcity even of such items as paper, colors, etc., he managed to do some work along this line. His free time was devoted to painting.

Already at the age of fourteen Hans' paintings received high praise and recognition in school exhibits. In the year 1937 at an art exhibit in the city of Zaporozhe he received the first prize for a portrait of the Ukrainian writer T. Shevchenko. Unfortunately, his father could not share in the joy of his son, since he had been exiled to Siberia the year before. Worries and concerns pertaining to his family caused much grief to the young artist. He devoted his time and talent to the portrayal of nature and peaceful landscapes at this time of turmoil and crisis. They are the motif of his paintings to this day.

In 1941, Hans J. Dyck graduated from the Teachers' Institute of Zaporozhe. This was the year the German army occupied the Ukraine. In 1943 the German army withdrew and the Mennonite population was taken along to Germany. His mother and sisters made this trip by wagon in 1944. It took them several months to reach Germany. They made the trip in winter and had to spend the nights in the open. Lack of food and shelter inflicted great hardships on the family. One of his sisters and the child of another sister froze to death. They had no opportunity to bury them, but had to leave them covered with straw and continue their journey. His mother lost both hands as a result of the frost. They finally arrived in North Germany, from whence they were sent back to Russia when the Russian army occupied the territory in which they resided. His mother died soon afterwards.

Hans came to Germany on his own without meeting his family. He was married in December, 1945 and lived near Stuttgart for a number of years. Here he learned the trade of making orthopedic shoes. In 1948 he and his wife arrived in Canada. They established their home in the town of Biggar, Saskatchewan. He now operates a shoe business and devotes his spare time to painting. His works of art have received acclaim and recognition in Canada.

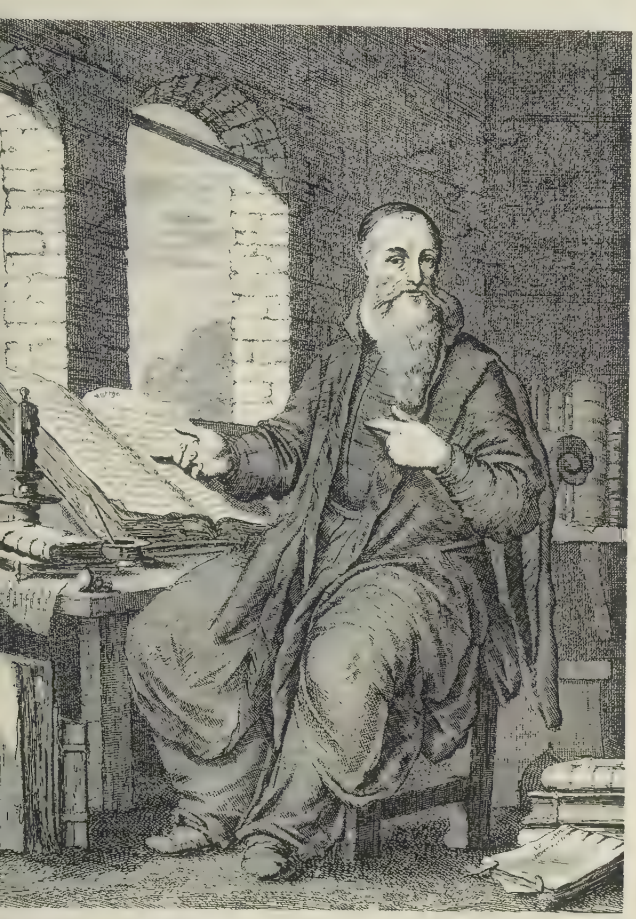


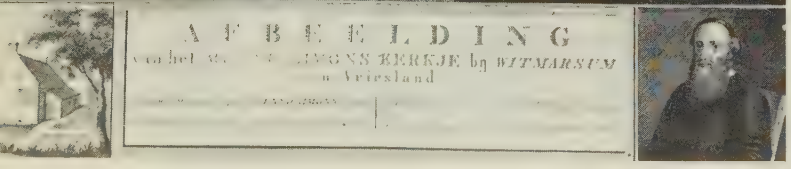
MENNO SIMONS (1496-1561)

A Pictorial Story

I. Friesland, The Netherlands

Menno according to Jan Luyken. The other pictures show contemporary life in the vicinity of Witmarsum, where Menno was born and was priest.





Menno's Witmarsum

Menno Preaching (Peter Holsteyn). (Top, left) Church in Pingjum where Menno was priest and had his first doubts regarding Mass. (Left) Exterior and interior of First Menno Simons Church, Witmarsum, where Menno is supposed to have preached. (This is the place where the Menno Simons Monument is located now). (Below) "White House" was used as Mennonite parsonage during 19th century and is supposed to have sheltered Menno at the time of his withdrawal. Menno can hardly have lived in this house or preached in the church (left, bottom) after he left the Catholic Church. He would not have survived.

Witmarsum Today

The pilgrim to Witmarsum may view scenes which will remind him of the spiritual struggles and the daily concerns of Menno. The Dutch Mennonite brotherhood has for many years taken an interest in preserving these sites of Menno's activity. This interest has spread to the rest of Europe and the American continents.

The death of Menno Simons on January 31, 1561, is being commemorated by various observances in many parts of the world.

(Left) Mennonite church and parsonage. The church was replaced in 1960 (see bottom). (Center) Menno Monument of Witmarsum. Site of first Mennonite church. (Bottom) New church under construction. (Below) Board of congregation, Bible class and table set for Lord's Supper. Pastor of the church is Leo Laurense, who attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary and had much to do with the building of the new church. American Mennonites supported the project.

Map Showing Where Menno Lived

This map shows the major places of Menno's activities. He was born and active in Witmarsum, Netherlands (west). After his conversion in 1536 he lived underground in the neighboring provinces of Groningen (Netherlands) and East Friesland (Germany) for a number of years. Many Anabaptist and Reformed refugees went from Catholic Netherlands to German East Friesland.

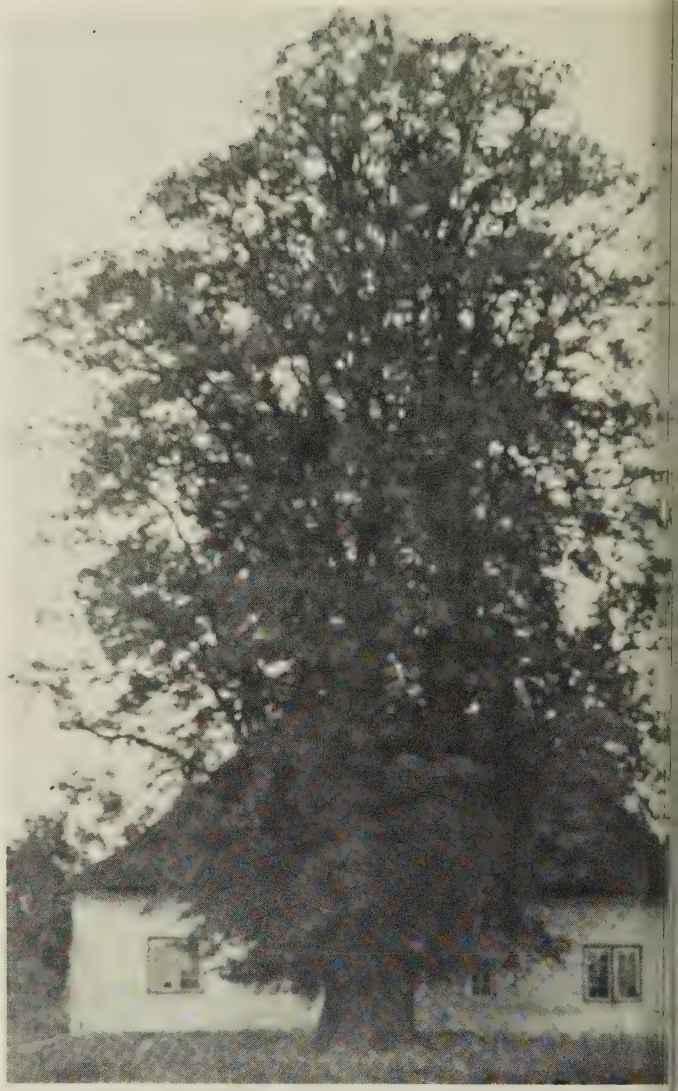
(Below) Scenes from contemporary life in East Friesland.

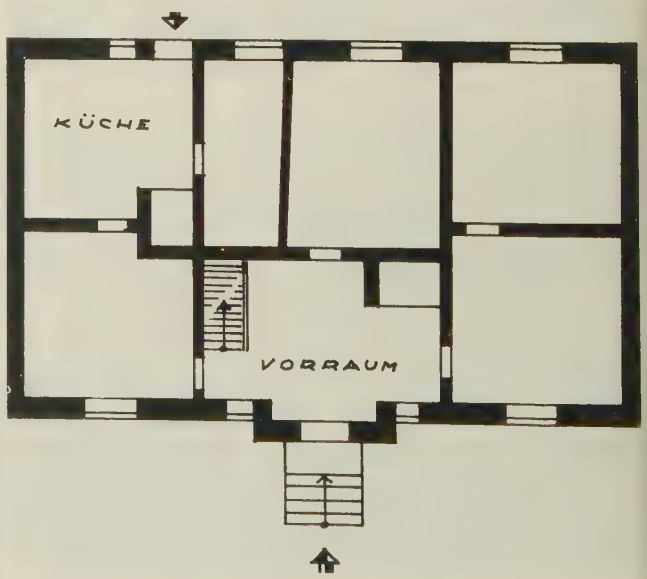
II. East Friesland, Germany

(Below, left) Melchior Hoffman, who transplanted the Anabaptist movement from Strasbourg to Emden, East Friesland. This etching by Christopher van Sichem shows him in prison in Strasbourg. In 1530 he baptized 300 followers in the Emden Reformed Church, starting the Anabaptist movement in the north. The church in which this took place was destroyed during World War II (right, below). From here the Anabaptist movement spread to the Netherlands where Menno joined it in 1536. When Menno fled to East Friesland, he found shelter on the estate of Ulrich van Dornum at Oldersum. The building (bottom) is the remnant of his castle, which was torn down in 1954. The picture on the right below shows a part of Emden in which the Mennonites lived in the early days (known as 't Falter) and the new church which includes the parsonage occupied by Dr. Heinold Fast, the pastor, and his parents.

III. Wüstenfelde near Oldesloe, Germany

From East Friesland Menno went east to Wismar and Lübeck in the province of Holstein, traveling extensively all over northern Europe. Schleswig-Holstein was Danish at that time. In 1554 he and his followers found shelter on the estate Wüstenfelde near Oldesloe between Hamburg and Lübeck. Near Wüstenfelde was the printshop in which Menno's writings were printed. In front of this printshop he is supposed to have planted a linden tree. The building and tree are the only markers still in existence which can be assumed to be directly related to Menno. (See article by Otto Regier, "Where Menno Lived and Died.") (Below) Close-up of house and sketch.





Where Menno Lived and Died

From 1554 to 1561 Menno lived in Wüstenfelde where he died on January 31, 1561, and was buried. Here a marker was put up in 1906 (left, above and below). In 1958 the marker received a new bronze plaque contributed by the German student organization and was transferred to the nearby Menno house (cabin) and linden tree. Now all three markers are together and easily accessible. On the old burial ground a new marker has been placed (below, right). The engraving by Abraham de Cooge, one of the oldest, shows Menno with a crutch. During the last years of his life he was crippled.

IV. The Witness of the Martyrs

These illustrations by Jan Luyken show us under what conditions Menno did his work as a messenger of the gospel. (Top, down) A group of Anabaptist worshipers on a boat listen to the minister while they pretend to be going somewhere by boat. Severe persecution made public meetings impossible. Jacob de Roore is interviewed by friar Cornelis before he is burned. (Right) Public torture scene whereby the martyr is put into a barrel with spikes before he is put to death. (Bottom) Scenes of martyrdom, the ultimate witness for Christ, taken from the pages of the MARTYR'S MIRROR.

Menno Simons and Dirk Philips Speak

The New Birth

By WILLIAN E. KEENEY

LUTHER'S great insight regarding justification by faith was a recovery of an essential point in the Christian faith, and it played a central part in the Reformation. On this point the Anabaptists usually acknowledged their indebtedness to him. Their regret was that after he made this great discovery, he never seemed to explore its fullest implications and apply them radically both to personal living and the life of the Church. Indeed, it seemed to Menno Simons that Luther in later days regressed and inhibited further development by his own attitude toward others who went beyond him.[1]

In the early days of his labors, Menno placed great stress upon the importance of the doctrine of justification by faith. In two of his earliest works, Menno dealt with the transformation that occurs through justification by faith, although he preferred what he probably considered to be the more Biblical concept of the new birth. This preference may also have reflected the needs for popular preaching as opposed to theological discussion. In 1536-37 Menno wrote a tract on "The Spiritual Resurrection" (*Van de Geestelijke Verrijsenisse, ende nieuwe of Hemelsche Geboorte.*)[2] In this tract he identified spiritual birth and sanctification with the spiritual resurrection.[3] Shortly thereafter he wrote another on "The New Birth" (*Van de nieuwe Geboorte*), which he revised and enlarged in 1550.[4] Nevertheless, it remained for Dirk Philips to give a fuller and more systematic treatment of the topic. He included in his *Enchiridion* a tract with the title, "Regeneration and the New Creature" (*Van der wedergeboorte ende nieuwe Creature*).[5] There was a separate edition of this tract earlier than 1564, but the date of its composition and first publication remains uncertain.[6] He had also dealt with this concept in a confession of faith which was published in 1557 but which was probably a revision of a briefer confession which first appeared about 1544-45.[7] This confession was included as the first part of the *Enchiridion* and places the new birth in the context of the major points of theology but in a much briefer form than in the tract.[8]

It appears that the new creatures in Christ, and the doctrines associated with it, were the real beginning points for both Menno Simons and Dirk Philips. This doctrine seems to be the predominant theme in Menno's first writings. Although it cannot be established as clearly from the order in which Dirk's writings appeared, the order in which he places his materials in the *Enchiridion* would tend to confirm that this was true for him also. Thus it seems that their movement of thought and experience was from the individual experience of rebirth as the source of their theology toward its corporate expression in the church, which more and more came to be the organizing principle for their theology and practices. The implications of the salvation experience with regard to the corporate expression evolved out of personal experience and conflict, so that Dirk's tract on the church, which appears to be late (1559-1564), is the only full-scale, systematic and separate treatment of the topic by either Menno or Dirk.[9]

Creation and Fall of Man

In order to understand fully the concept of the new creature, it is necessary to review Menno and Dirk's concept of the creation and fall of man even though their treatment was largely traditional. Man was created by God with a dual nature. He was of the earth since he was made from dust. He was also endowed with a divine nature; that is, he was created in God's "own image and likeness, as the holy Scripture testifies in many places, namely, that in the beginning God had created man unto eternal life, in the image and likeness of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. . . ."[10] Soon after this creation, however, man fell. The central issue was disobedience of man to God's commandments. Although man received the knowledge of good and evil by the act of disobedience, man also lost his original purity and immortality. Menno and Dirk's conception of original purity seems to resemble closely the loss of the theological virtues but is never so defined in explicit terms or limited to just the traditional three—faith, hope and love.[11]

The fall resulted in the loss of the divine nature, although God made provision or promise for its restoration.[12] Menno and Dirk interpreted original sin to have a slightly different connotation from the traditional understanding, although they seemed at times to be somewhat inconsistent in their views. Dirk apparently recognized this inasmuch as he once referred to "original sin" and added in a parenthetical remark "as some call it." Indeed, S. Hoekstra and Karel Vos have claimed that Dirk denied original sin, apparently because Dirk spoke incautiously with respect to the consequences of original sin in children.[13] If original sin implies a necessary guilt in all men from birth and a consequent condemnation by God until they are forgiven after

repentance, Dirk did deny original sin. If, however, it implies a nature that is weak or corrupted so that it inevitably sins, Dirk would have accepted this definition. Unfortunately, Dirk did not have the careful distinction between the "inevitable" but not "necessary" act of sin on the part of natural man which Reinhold Niebuhr makes.[14]

Both Menno and Dirk assumed that there was some physical corruption in human nature as a result of the fall. They seem to assume that Eve was bitten by the serpent and this became the source of the pollution.[15] Man's seed is henceforth impure, and the consequences of the fall are transmitted by heredity to all subsequent generations.[16] This original sin is not counted as guilt in children, however. Both Menno and Dirk insisted that condemnation does not occur until one reaches the age of understanding and can make responsible moral and ethical decisions. After reaching the age of understanding, disobedience entails guilt and condemnation as it did for Adam and Eve. Menno apparently used scholastic terminology in trying to distinguish between "potential" and "actual" sin, the latter resulting in guilt when it is done with understanding.[17] Dirk merely asserted that children were not held responsible until they had reached the age of understanding.[18]

There seems to be some inconsistency here inasmuch as Menno and Dirk make the sin a result of physical transmission, whereas sin is a spiritual reality. They seem to have some awareness of the problem when they strive to make the consequence of sin dependent upon action arising from understanding. Perhaps this is a result of using traditional scholastic theology to explain the moral and ethical demands which were closer to the position of the mystics such as the Brethren of the Common Life.

As man grows in understanding, he is able to distinguish good and evil, and eventually he sins because of his tendency to evil, and becomes personally responsible for his wrong actions. Thus, in addition to the universal fall of the prototypes, Adam and Eve, there is the particular fall of each individual.[19] Because of his knowledge of good and evil, man is able to perceive the righteousness of God. Through the revelation in the Scriptures, he may also know that he is destined to another end. The promise of God since Adam, through Abraham and David, has been that man will have his original nature restored. However, because of the inheritance of a corrupt nature from Adam and Eve, man is unable to restore himself. In such a state, man needs redemption.

Redemption through Atonement

At this point one must turn to Jesus Christ, for He is central in the fulfillment of the promise of redemption and the restoration of the divine nature to man. While the problem of the incarnation is related, it is not of primary concern here. Of primary concern at this point is the atonement, since this has the greatest bearing upon the new birth.

Again, there seem to be two aspects to the atonement. The first is the problem of guilt which needs to be forgiven and which is symbolized by a debt which man owes to God. Out of this need came the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, which was central for the Reformation as a whole. Menno and Dirk also acknowledged that Jesus' death was a sacrifice and a ransom, and that remission of sins is through the blood of Christ. From man's point of view, such an atonement was necessary in order to appease the wrath of God and to conquer the power of Satan.[20]

It seems, however, that in the minds of Menno and Dirk the real dynamic for salvation was found in vicarious atonement. They stress the love of God which caused Jesus voluntarily to accept the unmerited death of the cross, and by His example to stir men to repentance and obedience to God.[21] This emphasis upon the need to respond with obedience to the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, instead of just teaching the acceptance of the grace offered in the atonement, brought the Anabaptists into conflict with the Lutherans especially and the Calvinists to a lesser degree.

The Conversion Process

1. Free Will

The preaching of the Word is the means for bringing the revelation of God's grace to bear upon man's need. As indicated, it has a double function: to stir man to repentance because of the wrath of God and to give man hope of forgiveness because of the love of God. The Dutch Anabaptists made a serious attempt to balance the proper action on the part of man and the necessary action of God. The Roman Catholic Church seemed to offer a magical sacramentalism in which nothing was required of the individual in the way of response. Furthermore, since the church was the dispenser of grace, man controlled the means of salvation. Through the sacrament of penance, this led to a popular form of "works righteousness" by which one could earn his salvation. Luther rediscovered the necessity of justification by faith and the corollary of the priesthood of believers. With this discovery he also accepted Augustinian predestination and shifted the entire process into God's hands. Calvin also accepted predestination. It is significant that he placed faith before repentance in the conversion process and seemed to divorce it from any voluntary moral response on the part of man.[22] Yet his definition of repentance is very similar to what Menno or Dirk might propose. He defines it as follows:

> Wherefore I conceive it may be justly defined to be *"a true conversion of our life to God, proceeding from a sincere and serious fear of God, and consisting in the mortification of our flesh and of*

the old man, and in the verification of the Spirit."[23] Menno says,

> But if you wish to be saved, by all means and first of all, your earthly, carnal, ungodly life must be reformed. For it is naught but true repentance that Scriptures teach and enjoin upon us . . . We must be born from above, must be changed and renewed in our hearts and must be transplanted from the unrighteous and evil nature of Adam into the true and good nature of Christ, or we can never in all eternity be saved by any means, be they human or divine.[24]

While J. H. Wessel does acknowledge that Menno and Dirk have a deeper concept of sin than a doctrine of free will normally implies, he has pointed out the somewhat contradictory position which they adopted in attempting to deal with free will.[25] Menno explicitly rejected Zwinglian predestination because he believed that it made God rather than man responsible for sin and evil.[26] In other instances Menno implied freedom. He speaks of "all those who accept this proffered means of divine grace . . ."[27]; or ". . . until of my own choice I declared war upon the world, the flesh and the devil . . ."[28]; or "Remember the covenant of the Most High which you voluntarily desired and accepted being taught by the Word of God and led by the Holy Spirit."[29] Dirk is less obvious in his assumption of free will, but it is there nevertheless.[30]

It should perhaps be pointed out that Johannes Anastasius Veluanus, an important Dutch Reformer who was identified in most respects with the Zwinglian position, insisted that there is a little bit of free will left by which man can assist or hinder his salvation.[31] God created this little free will in man and preserved it after the fall. Despite sin, it remains by the grace of God.[32]

It may be that predestination was not as much of a problem for Menno and Dirk because they used a Dutch translation of Romans 8:20 where the term was found that circumvented the problem of time. Instead of saying that salvation was "predestined" or "fore-ordained," they merely said that it was "ordained" (*geordineert*) of God.[33] Menno did use a transliteration of the Latin, *"Predestinatie."*[34] This was used in citing the position of those with whom he disagreed, however. It should also be noted that Melchior Hoffman came to accept a doctrine of free will in opposition to the Lutherans. One of his major works was an "Explanation of the Captive and Free Will" (*Verclaringe van den geuangenen ende vrien wil*).[35] He based his position primarily on practical moral and ethical considerations rather than on rational, theological arguments. One may also find among the Swiss and South German Anabaptists attempts to express some measure of free will in opposition to what they considered to be Lutheran and Zwinglian deterministic predestination. Balthasar Hubmaier attempted to explain some degree of free will within the structure of Scholastic psychology.[36] On the other hand, Hans Denk explained it in terms of neo-Platonic, mystical theology.[37]

Menno and Dirk were somewhat contradictory when they attempted to recognize the paradox of a fully sovereign God and man created with sufficient freedom to remain morally and ethically responsible for his behavior and, therefore, of his destiny. They recognized some election but very clearly asserted that it was conditional and not "irresistible," to use a term that came into common use at a later period in Dutch history. The proffered grace is conditional, because it depends upon the belief and obedience of the individual.

Thus the Word may be used by the Holy Spirit to stir up a person to repentance. Upon repentance the believer is granted faith, which is "a powerful work of God and a gift of the Holy Spirit."[38] Justification is by faith alone. This is repeated by Menno and Dirk with emphasis.[39] They deny that any merits, whether of works, words, ceremonies, sacraments or signs are of any value for justification.[40] However, faith is not just an intellectual process or belief in certain historical facts. Dirk and Luther have strikingly similar statements in which they point out that knowledge of the historical Jesus is not sufficient for salvation. Luther says, ". . . it is not enough nor is it Christian, to preach the works, life and words of Christ as historical facts, as if the knowledge of these would suffice for the conduct of life. . . ."[41] Dirk says, "But this confession is not an historical knowledge regarding Christ, as many think, but a quickening and powerful work of God in man, whereby he becomes transformed. . . ."[42]

The positive definition of faith which Dirk gives is close to Calvin's, except that it does not incorporate as neatly the symbolism of the Trinity. Dirk defines faith as ". . . a living hope, a sure confidence in God's grace, and it directs one toward the things that are not seen, that are eternal and heavenly."[43] Calvin says, ". . . that it is a steady and certain knowledge of the Divine benevolence toward us, which, being founded on the truth of the gratuitous promise in Christ, is both revealed to our minds, and confirmed to our hearts, by the Holy Spirit."[44] Thus, faith is dynamically conceived so that one who receives it must bear fruits.

2. The Ontological Effects of Justification

The experience of justification results in a new birth, in which the individual is now born out of the divine nature. This results in a metaphysical but real change that will affect the total personality. The spirit is born of the spirit as the flesh was born of the flesh.[45] As man was born once of Adam and had a human nature that was carnal and sinful, earthly and corruptible, so now he receives another nature which was Adam's originally, but is now given through the second Adam, Jesus Christ. This is spiritual and divine, it is incorruptible

and heavenly. The old was outward; the new is inward.[46]

Through no work of his own, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is transplanted into God through the Holy Spirit.[47] This does not mean that man is like God and Christ in true being and person. The creature cannot become the Creator. Man still retains the human nature with its weaknesses as long as he is of flesh and blood. But the divine nature which restores the divine virtues and grants eternal life is added. Menno and Dirk normally expressed this distinction very carefully so as to preclude any possibility of confusion with pantheism where man is absorbed into God. Man is born out of (*uit*) and from (*van*) God, so that man's divine nature can only be created or conferred. On the other hand, Christ and the Holy Spirit are begotten from (*van*) God so that their divinity is uncreated. Jesus Christ, who is from (*van*) God but born out of (*uit*) man, partook of human nature with its weaknesses and mortality, yet without sin. Man, on the other hand, is born anew out of (*uit*) God and now partakes of the divine nature and becomes like Christ in holiness, glory, purity and eternal life.[48]

The new creature results from a metaphysical change in the nature of man. This is not merely a change in status before God, a forensic change. The transformation is a dynamic change that affects man's activities, that has results both in the spiritual nature of man and also produces fruits that are manifested physically in his moral and ethical behavior. If the transformation cannot be identified by other men, it is now ontological and is therefore meaningless. This new reality which results from a process of deification is called the new creature in Christ.

List of Abbreviations

BRN—*Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica.*
CWMS—*The Complete Writings of Menno Simons,* c. 1496-1561. (Scottdale, 1956).
HB—*Enchiridion Oft Handboecxken . . .* by Dirk Philips.
Instit.—Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin.
Opera—Opera Omnia Theologica by Menno Simons.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Note the shift in the reference to Luther in the *Foundation Book,* 1539. In the later edition Menno refers to Luther "through whose writings *at the outset* the Lord effeced no little good . . ." (CWMS, p. 126; *Opera,* p. 15A. Underlining mine.) Earlier he had referred to those who "had worked so mightily in the beginning . . ." (*Foundation Book,* 1539, fol. 25 ro.) Compare also the criticism that Luther and others wrote correctly in the beginning, but do not follow their own advice, *Opera,* pp. 499; 468A; CWMS, pp. 550, 514.
[2]*Opera,* pp. 179A-184B; CWMS, pp. 51-62.
[3]*Opera,* p. 179B; CMWS, p. 54.
[4]*Opera.* pp. 121-133; CWMS, pp. 87-102.
[5]BRN X, pp. 313-337; HB, pp. 293-320.
[6]BRN X, p. 19, n. 2.
[7]BRN X, pp. 15 and 25 ff.
[8]BRN X, pp. 60-68; HB, pp. 9-18.
[9]BRN X, p. 33, n. 4.
[10]BRN X, p. 316; HB, p. 296; *Opera,* p. 461A; CWMS, p. 503.
[11]*Opera,* p. 461A; CWMS, p. 503; BRN X, pp. 65, 75, f., 331, 345, 397; HB, pp. 14, 25, 313 f., 328, 387.
[12]*Opera,* p. 461A CWMS, p. 503 f., BRN X, pp. 65, 316; HB, pp. 15, 296.
[13]BRN X, p. 72; HB, p. 45; S. Hoekstra, *Beginselen en Leer . . .,* p. 266; K. Vos, *Menno Simons,* p. 214.
[14]*The Nature and Destiny of Man,* vol. II, 1945, p. 73.
[15]*Opera,* p. 461B; CWMS, p. 504; BRN X, p. 331; HB, p. 313; *Opera,* pp. 373B F., 583B; CWMS, pp. 876; BRN X, p. 165; HB, p. 129.
[16]*Opera,* pp. 461A, 507B f.; CWMS, pp. 503; 563; BRN X, pp. 65, 139, 150; HB, pp. 14 f., 99, 111.
[17]*Opera,* p. 507B f.; CWMS, p. 563; *Opera,* p. 461A; CWMS, p. 504.
[18]BRN X, p. 75; HB, p. 25 f. See also BRN X, p. 92; HB, p. 45.
[19]BRN X, p. 316; HB, p. 297.
[20]*Opera,* pp. 113B, 559B f., 641B; CWMS, pp. 393, 856 f., 1057; BRN X, pp. 28, 64 f., 116 ff; HB, pp. 6, 13, 15, 130 ff.
[21]BRN X, pp. 169 f.; 322 f.; HB, pp. 303 f., 133 f.
[22]*Instit.,* III:III:I.
[23]*Ibid.,* III:III:5.
[24]*Opera,* p. 125A; CWMS, p. 92; See also *Opera,* p. 200A; CWMS, p. 977.
[25]Wessel, *De Leerstellige Strijd,* p. 148 f.
[26]*Opera,* p. 311A; CWMS, p. 760. See also *Opera,* pp. 171A, 442B; CWMS, pp. 75, 301.
[27]*Opera,* p. 462A; CWMS, p. 505.
[28]*Opera,* p. 167A; CWMS. p. 69.
[29]*Opera,* p. 632B; CWMS, p. 410.
[30]W. Keeney, *Dirk Philips,* p. 121, esp. n. 1.
[31]BRN IV, p. 151 f.
[32]BRN IV, p. 153.
[33]*Opera,* p. 181A; BRN X, p. 334. Instit., III:XXIV:1, 6.
[34]*Opera,* p. 262A. See also, Opera, p. 311A marginalia.
[35]BRN V, pp. 171-198.
[36]*Library of Christian Classics,* XXV, pp. 114-135.
[37]*Ibid,* pp. 88-111.
[38]BRN X, p. 83; HB, p. 40.
[39]*Opera,* pp. 416B f., 112B; 416B f., 463 f., 311A; CWMS, pp. 261 f., 291, 504, 506 ff., 760; BRN X, pp. 50, 292, 330 f.; HB, pp. 6, 269, 312 f.
[40]*Opera,* pp. 406B, 416B, 311A; CWMS, pp. 245, 261, 760; BRN X, pp. 64, 67; HB, pp. 14, 17.
[41]*Works of Martin Luther,* vol. II, p. 326.
[42]BRN X, p. 170, HB, p. 135.
[43]BRN X, p. 320; HB, p. 300.
[44]*Instit.,* III:II:7.
[45]*Opera,* pp. 180A f., 583B f., 583B f.; CWMS, p. 54 f., 893; BRN X, pp. 95, 149 ff; HB, pp. 48, 110 ff.
[46]*Opera,* pp, 125A, 178, 462B, 374B; CWMS, pp. 92 f.; 130, 506, 819 f.; BRN X, pp. 140, 255, 299, 302; HB, pp. 99 f., 230, 277, 281.
[47]BRN X, pp. 67, 148 f., 303; HB, pp. 17, 109 f., 281.
[48]BRN X, p. 300; HB, p. 278.
(*From Doctoral Dissertation*)

INDEX: 1959-60

Containing a comprehensive index of the past five years, this issue is a very useful guide to materials published in MENNONITE LIFE from 1956 to 1960. This issue and the issue of January, 1956, constitute a complete index of MENNONITE LIFE.

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Menno Simons Polemics with Catholics

By HENRY POETTCKER

WHEN Luther brought Menno Simons to the realization that the refusal to accept the Roman Catholic teaching did not spell doom for him, and when the Dutch priest found himself turning to the Scriptures more and more, a horizon was broadening for him which was to open up rare and dangerous possibilities. It also brought him a countless number of unhappy experiences. His friends became his enemies; his church, whose duty it was to dispense salvation, became his persecutor and judge; and those from whom he expected further support in the great cause of religious reform became his avowed opponents.

Menno's life, from the time after he had wrestled through to a spiritual victory in his own person, was one of religious disputation and struggle with others. Beginning with the Münsterites, who were kin to his new-found faith in a number of ways, he rubbed shoulders (often not too gently) with the Catholics, the Lutherans, the Reformed, and also with a number of radicals. It shall be the purpose of this article to see some of the controversies which Menno had with the Catholics, with an attempt to delineate the issues which were involved.

It is clear that there were two basic issues which led Menno to break with the Catholic Church—the Mass and infant baptism. When Menno began to read the Scriptures diligently, the conviction came to him that the church had betrayed him. Not only in the celebration of the Mass, not only in the practice of baptism, but in its very structure it showed unmistakable signs of unrighteousness and idolatry. From first hand experience, he wrote later of the sin and wickedness, the idolatry and false worship, the hypocrisy and the carnal life which existed within the church.[1] Already in his epistle against Jan van Leyden he was convinced that "the Roman Babylon" would not escape a visitation similar to the Babylon of old.[2] As he read the Scriptures, it became clear to him that the church stood condemned[3] on a number of counts: On its practice of the Mass, nothing less than a denial of Christ;[4] on its toleration of priests whose life and teachings revealed that they were "not of God and His word";[5] on its demands of unconditional obedience to the Pope; and on its adherence to numerous other unbiblical practices.[6] How deeply Menno felt on this matter comes to the fore in the drastic comment, that concerning these things (the things which the Catholic Church practices) Christ Jesus "has not left nor commanded us a single letter."[7]

With statements such as these, it is readily apparent that those of whom they were spoken would not remain silent for long. The reaction soon came. Holland in the 1530's, particularly in the years following the Münster episode, was a place of severest persecution, and the Catholics spared no pains to bring the heretics to the gallows. Menno writes in 1541:

> And this is not yet enough, that they practice such abominations. But they go on to despise as vain and useless all the true fruits of faith, those commanded by the Son of God Himself; the genuine, pure love and fear of God, the love and service to our neighbors, and the true sacraments and worship. They also revile them as damnable and heretical, and exterminate and persecute them.[8]

In comparison with the polemics carried on between the Lutherans and Reformed, and the Anabaptists (which was voluminous), that between the Catholics and the Anabaptists was not too extensive[9] This is especially true of the Netherlands, where it appears that the Inquisition was not so much the last resort as the first resort in dealing with the heretics.[10] Notwithstanding, there were those among the Roman Catholics who were concerned that the Anabaptist teachings be refuted, and expressed the wish that such writings be prepared.[11]

Menno's name and his writings found their way into a number of the indices as also some of the brief sketches of the different heresies of the time, but very few Catholic writers undertook to consider his teachings in greater detail. The general attitude of the Catholic Church toward all heretics was, of course, clear, and this will no doubt have been one factor why specific writings against the Mennonites were not forthcoming for some time.

One opponent Menno found in the person of Joannes Bunderius or van den Bundere (1482-1557). Bunderius was a Flemish theologian of the Dominican Order who had studied at Louvain and then returned to Ghent, his birthplace, where he taught until shortly before the end of his life. Besides teaching, he also served as prior of the convent of Ghent for several terms, and also discharged the duties of Inquisitor General of the Tournai Diocese. In the latter capacity he dealt with Lutherans, Calvinists and Mennonites. Most of his writings were polemical in nature and of the more important ones, one was written specifically against Luther (*Detectio nugarum Lutheri cum declaratione veritatis Catholicae* [Louvain, 1551]), and another against Menno (*De Vero Christi*

baptismo contra Mennonem Anabaptistarum principe [Louvain, 1553]).[12]

Martin Duncanus

Menno met a second opponent in the person of Martin Duncanus or Martin Donk (1505-1590).[13] Born near Kempen, Donk studied in Nymegen and Louvain and then served as regent of the Standonck home in Mecheln. In 1541 he went to Wormer as pastor and while there he wrote a number of works against the Anabaptists. It was here that he became acquainted with Menno, and since there were a number of Menno's followers in the area surrounding the Wormer parish, he entered into discussions with them seeking to convert them. One of Donk's biographers, Felix Ruetten,[14] refers to these endeavors on Donk's part, saying that the latter could easily dispose of the arguments of the Anabaptists, but that he was unable to convert them. Menno's *Fundamentboeck* came out in 1540, but as hard as Donk tried, it was several years before he got a copy into his hands. Once he did he wrote an answer to refute Menno's teachings. His work, consisting of two volumes, was *Anabaptisticae heareseos confutatio et vere Christiani baptismi ac potissimum paedobaptismatis assertio. . .* Anverpiae, 1549.[15] The reason for the book's being written in Latin was that Donk was not very fluent with the Dutch language. Besides dealing with baptism, it also treated with other matters such as the assurance of salvation and the true church.[16] While it was not printed until 1549, it was ready in manuscript for two years earlier. This could mean that he may have become acquainted with other of Menno's writings before he finished this first polemic against the Frisian. While still at Wormer, Donk also wrote the tract *Vant rechte evangelische Avontmael,* which, however, was not printed until 1567, some years after he had left Wormer to take up duties as pastor in Delft.[17] Almost to the end of his life Donk was a prolific writer. Several of his other writings will be mentioned during the course of the further discussion.

It will be in order to look briefly at Menno's presentation in his *Fundamentboeck* since it was to this that Donk spoke when he prepared his refutation. While the attention in the discussion here will be directed primarily to the presentation of the Lord's Supper and infant baptism, the two which constituted the occasion for Menno's break with the Catholic Church, in a broader sweep his concept of the essence of the church will also be considered.

Mass and Lord's Supper

There were several reasons why one of the first problems which confronted Menno was that of the Mass. With the Sacramentist movement growing apace in Holland, he was brought face to face with the possibility of another interpretation, and when the struggle was over, he had come a considerable distance from the Roman Catholic view. In speaking of the Supper in the *Fundament,* Menno is thinking primarily of the Roman Catholic practice. His introductory remarks point to the many misunderstandings concerning this practice, misunderstandings that have come about because there is so much disputing about the outward sign (Lutheran and Zwinglian controversy). Menno's approach at this piont is, "The spiritual judge all things spiritually."[18] Four things are said about the Supper. 1) It is not right to make the visible, perishable bread and wine the Lord's actual flesh and blood. The Lord's Supper is a sign signifying a reality, an admonishing sign and a memorial to the fact that Christ Jesus delivered man from the power of the devil and from eternal death by the sinless sacrifice of His innocent flesh and blood. 2) There is no greater proof of love than that one die for another, and since the Supper is a holy sign, a memorial of His death, which latter is the greatest proof of love, we are admonished to partake of the bread and wine both to remember His death and to remember all the glorious fruits of divine love manifested toward us in Jesus Christ. 3) In the Lord's Supper the partakers are enjoined to Christian unity, love and peace; after all these true Christians strive. 4) The Holy Supper is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:16.[19]

After a moving section in which Menno expresses the meaning of Jesus' words to his disciples that last evening in the form of an extended statement (as if Jesus Himself were speaking), he concludes:

> Dear readers, consider the Word of the Lord and this institution. For wherever this Holy Supper is celebrated with such faith, love, attentiveness, peace, unity of heart and mind, there Jesus Christ is present with His grace, Spirit, promise, and with the merits of His sufferings, pain, flesh, blood, cross and death; as He Himself says: Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. But where the true knowledge of Christ, active faith, new life, Christian love, peace and unity are not present, there is not the Lord's Supper, but a despising and mocking of the blood and death of Christ occurs; this is an encouragement for the impenitent, a seductive hypocrisy, a patent blasphemy and idolatry, as alas we know and see with the world.[20]

In the preceding section Menno has spoken at some length to the meaning of Communion with Christ, and he goes on to say that those who come without the true knowledge of Christ and without faith and the new life, do *not* have communion and therefore cannot be guests at His table. The sum of the whole matter, Menno says a little farther on, is just this: "he who would sit at the Lord's table with the disciples and guests of Christ, be he rich or poor, high or low, must be sound in faith and unblameable in conduct and life." Then he turns to a discussion of the perversions of the Supper in the Roman Catholic Church. In the first place, to "institute unto the destruction and corruption of the true eternal sacrifice of

Christ which alone is effective before God, changing it into a daily sacrifice for sin" as is done in the Mass, is to despise the atonement of Christ and to undo what He has accomplished. It is nothing short of arrogating unto man all power in heaven and earth, for in essence this is what is implied when the bread is broken in three pieces—to reconcile God, to intercede for the world, and to pray for the souls in purgatory. This is entirely wrong, for the Word teaches that with *one* sacrifice He has perfected forever those who are sanctified.

In the second place, the teaching of transubstantiation, *viz.*, that the bread and wine are made the actual body and blood of Christ, is wrong. It stems from a literal interpretation of the words, "this is my body," and "this is my blood," John chapter 6, where Jesus instructs plainly how His flesh is to be eaten, and how His blood is to be drunk, is the guide for the interpretation to be given to these words. The spiritual reality is the one to be emphasized here. "For the external use of the sign is nothing but a false show and hypocrisy if the thing which is invisibly represented is not presented with it."[21] Menno laments the fact that the world (and this includes the Roman Church) does not know what the Supper is essentially, what it symbolizes, nor who is to partake of it.

In the third place, the Roman Catholic Church is wrong in teaching that this bread is dispensed for the forgiveness of sins. Scripture teaches that there is only one way, and that is through the atonement made by Christ when He shed His blood. Menno lists a number of references, quoting several of them, references which speak of God blotting out man's transgressions, the blood of the New Testament shed for man, etc. It is false doctrine which tends to deny the true mercy seat and erect strange Baals to be worshipped in Christ's place,[22] It is out of this perverted view of the Supper that the further abominations come. Men have turned away from the Creator to the creature and from the reality to the perishable signs "so that the mocking shame of the godless mass must pass for the sacrifice of the Lord, and bread and wine for His real flesh and blood." Like Israel, they have placed in God's stead a visible creature which they can touch and mold to their own image. Thus it is clear to Menno:

> From this fountain springs all the hideous idolatry practiced with this abomination, such as carrying the bread in procession, raising it aloft for adoration, praying to it, offering incense to it, requesting it at a given place, and paying divine honor and service to it—things for which there is not a hint either in letter or in spirit in all the Scriptures.[23]

There is, therefore, only one right course for those who are genuinely born again and who are obedient to Christ—they must shun all seducing and idolatrous preachers in regard to doctrines, sacraments, and worship.[24]

Donk and the Eucharist

What was Donk's position with respect to the Eucharist? Interestingly enough his first writing against Menno did not deal with the Lord's Supper. Hence it is necessary to look to later ones[25] for his viewpoint. Christ is partaken of in the Mass not only in faith, but in essence (wesentlich); otherwise the apostles, who could not yet have faith in the broken body (before the death of Christ), would not have been able to receive the sacrament.[26] The real presence is the faith of all the past centuries and of the present church. The sacrifice of the altar is a figure, as e.g., those under the Old Covenant, but the truth of the earlier shadows, a truth now fulfilled.[27] Menno says that when the Mass is changed into a daily sacrifice for sin, Christ's eternal sacrifice is corrupted and His atonement is undone. Furthermore, "All the Mosaic types and shadows, all the oracles of the prophets, promises of the angels, and the whole New Testament, are in this way denied—things that unanimously point to the one and eternal sacrifice of Christ."[28] Donk is sure that the real presence (to be understood in the words "this is my body") is to be taken only in *one* sense as does the Roman Catholic Church, not in hundreds of different ways, as is seen in the interpretations given by the heretics. That the bread and wine are transformed is not unnatural but supernatural,[29] and that Christ actually intended the transformation is shown clearly in the Gospel accounts by Paul. And then one notes an interesting comparison. Menno maintains that to accept the Catholic view of the presence is to arrogate to man all power in heaven and on earth—in other words, make God do his bidding. Donk says that to accept the Reformed view (with which Menno can be classed here), is to rob Christ of His omnipotence, since it discounts His power to come down from heaven, thus making man more powerful than God (according to Calvin man could bring Christ down through faith). The same charge is thus made by both, but entirely different presuppositions. For Donk, Christ through His own power is with His body in heaven and in the sacrament on earth simultaneously.

That the Eucharist is a sacrifice cannot be denied, says Donk. It is closely connected with the sacrifice on the cross. But more than that, it is a special and complete sacrifice. Just as the offering in the Old Testament was not completed until the animal had not only been slaughtered but also consumed, whether by the fire or by the human partakers, even so the sacrifice of Christ was not completed when He died on the cross, but rather when His flesh is eaten in the Eucharist. In this way the Eucharist becomes the completion of the sacrifice on the cross.—Against this view Menno spoke repeatedly. This was nothing less than undoing the atonement, and with such an interpretation Menno had little patience; he used rather strong statements against this position.[30] For Donk it was clear that the priests, as they celebrated the Mass, were aiding in man's salvation.[31]

The Meaning of Baptism

Since this raises the question of forgiveness of sins, it is now in order to look at Donk's view of baptism. But

again it will be best to summarize Menno's position first. Menno's starting point is the Great Commission. It sets forth the sequence of preach, believe, baptize. Because children are without understanding and unteachable, baptism is not to be administered to them; to do so is to pervert the ordinance of the Lord. The New Testament enjoins no ceremonies for infants because they do not have the understanding for them. Christ's command was taught and practiced by the apostles. Christ's example of baptism, submitting to baptism according to the will of the Father, was that he might fulfill all righteousness. If it be argued that this was the way it was at the beginning, but that after the number of Christians increased, and time passed, children were also included, Menno says no! They must be able to comprehend what is taking place. Nor can it be argued, from circumcision, that children are to be baptized.

To speak to the meaning of baptism, Menno begins with Paul's teaching. As Christ died and was buried, so we ought to die unto ourselves and be buried with Christ in baptism. And this dying must have begun before baptism. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection . . ." Romans 6:5ff. This dying does not mean moral perfection, "that sin is sensed no longer." Rather the Christian dies to sin so that he is no longer subject to its impure lusts. To bury our sins in baptism is of little avail unless we also rise with Christ to newness of life. Children rise to a new life as long as they are not born of God through faith, and are led into righteousness by the Spirit of God. Regeneration comes from God and His Word, and faith comes from the same source. Children cannot comprehend the Word and therefore they are not to be baptized. Against the contention that baptism is a sign of grace, Menno insists that the sign of grace is Christ Jesus alone.

The refutation of the Pedobaptist arguments by Menno may be briefly summarized. To the contention that children must be purified from orginal sin by baptism, Menno answers: that all men are sinners and wholly depraved is certainly true. But sins are not forgiven through baptism but by Christ — his merits, death and blood avail here. While man is to believe to appropriate this unto himself, in the case of innocent children sin is not imputed for Jesus' sake. Life is promised them not through any ceremony, but in pure grace, through the blood of Christ, as he says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

To the argument that the children of the old covenant were circumcised and therefore now children ought to be baptized, Menno says, Abraham was in the Covenant before he was given the sign of circumcision, and therefore the covenant does not depend upon the sign. It is not possible to take Paul's statement about circumcision (Romans 2:25-29) as justifying infant baptism, for Paul does not teach that external circumcision is a figure of baptism, but of inner circumcision. The knife with which the inward circumcision is performed is the Word of God.[32] Baptism does not regenerate children, nor does it wash away original sin as is claimed. Nor does it make matters any better to say that baptism washes away original sin, not in the sense that it is no more, that it will not be counted to children as sin. This is an open blasphemy against Christ and His blood. In a similar way, the argument which says that Christ cleansed and sanctified the church with the washing of water by the Word and that since children belong to the church they must be cleansed by washing, *viz.,* baptism, does not hold, for Paul is speaking to those who hear and believe the Word of God. Equally untenable are the arguments that infants are to be baptized because of the promise, or that the apostles baptized whole families. Promises do not necessitate baptism, and it cannot be maintained, as the opponents do, that Christ taught differently about infant baptism after His death than He did before His death.

One final comment will suffice at this point: it is quite clear that for Menno the important thing is the Word, example and teaching of Christ and the apostles. What they did is normative, nay, imperative for the believer. What they did not do is thereby forbidden.

Infant Baptism

In the first book of his major work on baptism, *Anabaptisticae haereseos confutatio,* Donk undertakes to speak to Menno's concept of baptism. According to him Menno maintains that the command to baptize is the least of all commandments and that it is wrong to say that sins are forgiven through baptism. Donk takes issue with Menno's statement that the blood of Christ is the only means of salvation and that the new birth and the acceptance of men as children of God does not occur through baptism but prior to baptism through obedient faith. Menno, says Donk, contradicts himself in that he sometimes identifies the new birth with the receiving of the Holy Spirit, sometimes says that the receiving of the Holy Spirit follows the new birth, and sometimes says that the receiving of the Holy Spirit occurs at baptism. Nor can Donk accept Menno's contention that the impartation of the Holy Spirit is the assurance of salvation. Furthermore, Menno's proof that the example of Moses' rod and the serpent in the wilderness substantiated his thesis that the new birth is not a result of baptism but of obedient faith,[33] is seen as exactly the opposite—these Israelites who experienced the power of the rod were lacking in faith.[34]

The second book deals particularly with infant baptism. Children are subject to original sin, and from this only baptism can cleanse them. Menno's reference to the passage, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," is hardly sufficient to prove that their sins are taken care of without baptism. The unknowing faith of children (*Unkenntnis des Glaubens*) is no deterrent for the working of baptism[35] and the continuous practice of the church is the

ustification for infant baptism. Christ's words indicate hat children too need to be baptized, and the results of baptism— the blessings of which children also may partake, even as can adults—are further justification for children being baptized. Donk's extended refutations of the many scriptural arguments against infant baptism which Menno gives,[36] point up clearly that the two operated with different presuppositions. Donk could not imagine that one could dissociate himself from the church as Menno did or that the testimonies of the Fathers were not to be taken at face value. While he attempted to argue also on scriptural grounds, since he was aware that Menno did not permit the arguments from tradition, his orientation within the Roman Catholic Church gave him little room to consider the Mennonite and Reformed emphasis.

It might be interesting to speculate whether Menno would have changed or reformulated some of his arguments if he could have read Donk's rebuttal of his position. As it was Donk's first writing against him was the only one which Menno could have read. The others appeared after the latter's death. Donk was not impressed with Menno's approach and accused him of owing much of his knowledge to Sebastian Franck.[37] Certainly Donk could not have been happy with Franck's strong invectives against the Roman Catholic Church.[38] When Franck compared the church of his day with the heathen of earlier times, he saw many parallels—in fact, on occasion he deemed it better to give heathendom a higher rating than the Medieval Church.[39] It must have been painful for Donk to read in the third part of Franck's work of *secten* in the Roman Church, of "practices of the Roman Church against those of the first Church," or of the "arrival of idolatry" — kissing the Pope's feet, etc.[40] What must all Catholics have thought when they read Franck's preface to his *Päpstliche Chronik:*

> Nun wollen wir mit Gott an die geistlich doppelwelt hin, an den Teueffel, der im mittag schleicht, an die seuecht und pfeil, die des tags fliegen und verderben, ja an den verlornen hauffen, der sich rein und sauber dunckt und doch nit von seinem unflat gewaschen ist, darunder die Christen eingemengt umbfaren wie etlich koerner under einem hauffen spreuer, wie Loth in Sodoma. . . .[41]

Menno certainly knew Roman Catholicism at firsthand, but it was true that he used illustrations or historical references from Franck's work to enhance some of his own descriptions. Undoubtedly, it was also the marked aversion to this degenerated curia which determined to some extent the strong emphasis on a life of moral uprightness in Menno's approach. This calls for a brief consideration of his concept of the church.

As Menno reflected on his past life, he had to lament every day which he had spent in the Catholic Church. The Scriptures had opened his eyes to the deep-seated evils which had wormed their way into its very foundation and from the remarks which he inserts here and there in his writings, he realized how low was the moral life of those who were designated as the spiritual guardians of God's people. But that his eyes were opened to the message of the Scriptures meant more than just seeing the evils which were so prevalent. It meant also that there was a comforting element, for the Scriptures indicated directives so that the situation could be changed. The example of the early church presented a picture of a true Christian church.

While Menno sees the church of Christ having its beginning before the time of the Lord's earthly sojourn, he recognized that the promises have now been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and therefore all teachings of the Old and New Testaments must be understood according to the sense and intention of Christ and His apostles, all the more because God the Father has placed only this one as the foundation-stone of Zion.[42] This means further that church and daily walk (*gemeente en leven*) must be according to the Scriptures.[43] Attention has been directed earlier to the central place, the guide and the norm, which Jesus' words receive in Menno's total religious outlook. It speaks to the matter of the nature of the church—composed of those who have been born again through faith in Christ and whose desire it now is to walk according to the Lord's spirit, word and example.[44] The teachings of this fellowship are derived from the Gospel of Christ—obedience to the Word of God, unfeigned brotherly love, a ready testimony for Christ, the scriptural use of the Lord's Supper and the willingness to suffer for Christ, a suffering that will inevitably come.[45] While Menno can still draw for illustrations from history and from the Fathers, these can no longer be determinative for faith in any sense of the word. Now tradition definitely takes a lesser place, and the example of the apostolic church is the guide for belief and action.

The New Birth and Baptism

In the practical application of this concept, there are a number of radical departures from that of the Catholic Church. To begin with Menno insists on the new birth—the conversion of sinful man who stands condemned before God—to make for a relationship of acceptance with God. Taking John 3:3,5 seriously he believes that none can enter the Kingdom of God except he be born again. This is central in the proclamation of the Gospel, and this demands a personal response. It is for that reason that Menno cannot accept the idea that baptism conveys the new birth.[46] When the Word has been preached and the Word has engendered faith, then the new birth has become a reality, and hereupon baptism may follow. Baptism, as seen earlier, is the sign of obedience, commanded by Christ, by which the believer testifies that he believes the Word of the Lord, that he repents of his former life and conduct, that he desires to rise with Christ to a new life, and that he believes in the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.

Membership within the fellowship is thus not inevitable

as it is in the churches where infant baptism is practiced, but it depends upon a personal decision. Membership is voluntary, but for the believer it is not optional. The one who casts in his lot with Christ accepts His commands and His practices for his own life. But there is more. Each one who joins this fellowship is now duty-bound to live up to its standards—standards which are set by Christ Himself. It is not a matter of all having been done when the initial step of entrance has been taken. To fail to live according to the Spirit, Word and precepts of the Master is to incur the censure of the brotherhood, a brotherhood whose duty it is to admonish, reprimand, and if necessary excommunicate those who do not evidence the fruits of their relationship with Christ.

It was at this point that the Catholic Church was so severely criticized. Donk saw Menno's point only too well, and in some of his writings he endeavored to speak for the 'fruits' of the Roman Church. Already in the one on the Eucharist he spoke to the accusation which had been made that the Roman Church had fallen.[47] More specifically he wrote *Die Vruchten der ecclesie Christi . . .* in which he sought to depict how Catholic Christianity was spreading throughout the world. Mention is made of the work of the different Orders: Jesuits, Franciscans, etc., and citations are given from missionaries and converted Christians about the *wonderlicke wonderheyden* done through God's grace.[48] Following this came his work *Van die warachtighe ghemeynte Christi . . . ,* an apology for the Roman Catholic Church. Donk stated that here he was not so much concerned to refute the opponents, as to set forth clearly the essence of the church. If people had this knowledge, they would not be tempted to turn to the teachings of others. Donk contends that true faith is to be found only in the true church, the church visible in the Roman Catholic structure. He argues for excommunication, for the fact that the church alone may interpret the Scriptures, the heretics are to be dealt with by civil powers and that justifiably so, and that the teaching office of the church is infallible.[49] To the problem of immortality and the charges brought against the Catholic Church because of this, he devotes an entire section dealing with the holiness of the church, and how one must understand this word.[50]

According to Ruetten, Donk's use of the Scripture (extensive because his opponents would not accept any other authority—not even the Church Fathers) was not always commendable. Thus, *e.g.*, the passage "My house shall be called a house of prayer," is seen as a justification for the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. Ruetten cannot censure Donk for this, however, because the current practice of the opponents was so very similar. Like Menno, Donk often did little more than present "proof-texts" and his discussions are most tedious to read.[51]

It becomes evident that Donk and Menno were far apart in their religious positions. For Menno to question not only a number of the tenets of the Catholic Church, but to call into question its very structure, was an action which could not be tolerated. Donk often refers to the *Neuerer,* a term which includes Mennonites, Lutherans and/or Reformed, depending on the opponents to which he was directing himself at the moment. All alike are dangerous to the Roman Catholic position and thus guilty of heresy. There were here positions irreconcilable with the "true faith" of the Catholic Church.

Menno's evaluation of the Roman Catholic position was just as critical, and he concluded of the church from which the grace of God had rescued him that its teachings were diametrically opposed to the Scriptures. Furthermore, since the Catholics in effect negated the atonement of Christ with their celebration of the Mass and infant baptism, the indictment against them was most severe. Both on the matter of authority and on the matter of soteriology, Roman Catholicism stood condemned. While there were minor issues which necessarily became problems also, basically these two constituted the points of difference; that the character of the church was then also seen as vastly different by the Catholics on the one hand and Menno on the other is readily apparent.

Footnotes

[1]*Opera Omnia Theoloica,* Amsterdam, 1681, Fol. 257bf.
[2]*Ibid.*, Fol. 629a.
[3]*Ibid.*, Fol. 29b.
[4]*Ibid.*, Fol. 29bf.
[5]*Ibid.*, Fol. 44b.
[6]*Ibid.*, Fol. 78a.
[7]*Ibid.*, Fol. 78a.
[8]*Ibid.*, Fol. 78b.
[9]*Mennonite Encyclopedia,* I pp. 532-534.
[10]*Opera,* Fol. 334a.
[11]*Vide,* Felix Ruetten, *Martin Donk,* 1515-1590 (Münster i. W., 1906), p. 28f., 52.
[12]A search in the major libraries of America and several in Europe has failed to locate a copy of this work. There also appears to be no secondary source which treats with Bunderius in any extended way. *Vide, The Catholic Encyclopedia,* III, p. 59.
[13]The original sources for Donk were also not available to this writer, hence secondary sources have been used.
[14]Ruetten, *op. cit.,* p. 26.
[15]On the basis of this work a certain Alphonsus a Castro said that though many have written against the Anabaptists, none had written as comprehensively and in so scholarly a manner as Martin Donk, Ruetten, *op. cit.,* p. 90. De Hoop Sheffer said something similar—it was one of the sharpest polemics written against Menno by a Catholic, Vos, *op. cit.,* p. 304.
[16]Ruetten, *op. cit.,* p. 28.
[17]*Ibid.,* p. 31.
[18]*Opera,* Fol. 24b.
[19]*Ibid.*, Fol. 24b-26b.
[20]*Ibid.*, Fol. 27b.
[21]*Ibid.*, Fol. 31b.
[22]*Ibid.*, Fol. 33a.
[23]*Ibid.*, Fol. 31b f
[24]*Ibid.*, Fol. 33b.
[25]These were, *Vant rechte evangelissche Avontmael,* (Antwerp, 1568); *Corte confutatie ende wederleginghe van een finijnich Boeck . . . ,* (n.p., 1578); *Van het nievwe sacrificium des Christendoms . . .* (Antwerp, 1580).
[26]*Van het nievwe sacrificium,* chp. 1, 2; Ruetten, *op. cit.,* p. 85.
[27]*Van het nievwe sacrificium,* chp. 6-18.
[28]*Opera,* Fol. 29b.
[29]Ruetten, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
[30]*Opera,* Fol. 29b ff.

[1]In the selection *Van die verghiffenisse der sonden* . . . he has a whole section which deals with the part which God, Christ, the priestly service and human participation have in the *Gesamtwerk* of salvation. Book 2, Ruetten, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[2]*Ibid.*, Fol. 19b.

[3]*Opera*, Fol. 14a.

[4]*Anabaptisticae*, chp. 10; Ruetten, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[5]*Anabaptisticae*, chp. 3

[6]*Ibid.*, chp. 8-16; cf. Ruetten, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[7]Vos, *Menno Simons*, p. 306. 2

[8]*Geschichtsbibel*, Third Chronik; cf. Raeber, *op. cit.*, p. 61 ff.

[9]*Geschichtsbibel*, Fol. 494a.

[10]*Ibid.*, sections 4-6.

[11]*Ibid.*, Fol. 254b.

[12]*Opera*. Fol. 450a.

[43]*Ibid.*, Fol. 116a.

[44]*Ibid.*, Fol. 255b.

[45]*Ibid.*, 300bf.

[46]*Ibid.*, Fol. 419a.

[47]The work against which Donk wrote saw several editions. It was reprinted by Steven Mierdman, *Den val der Roomscher Kercken* . . . London, 1556. This is reprinted in *RRN*, I, p. 399ff. Cf. Ruetten, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[48]Ruetten, *op. cit.*, p. 49f.

[49]*Ibid.*, p. 52f.

[50]*Ibid.*

[51]*Ibid.*, p. 91f.

(*From Doctoral Dissertation*)

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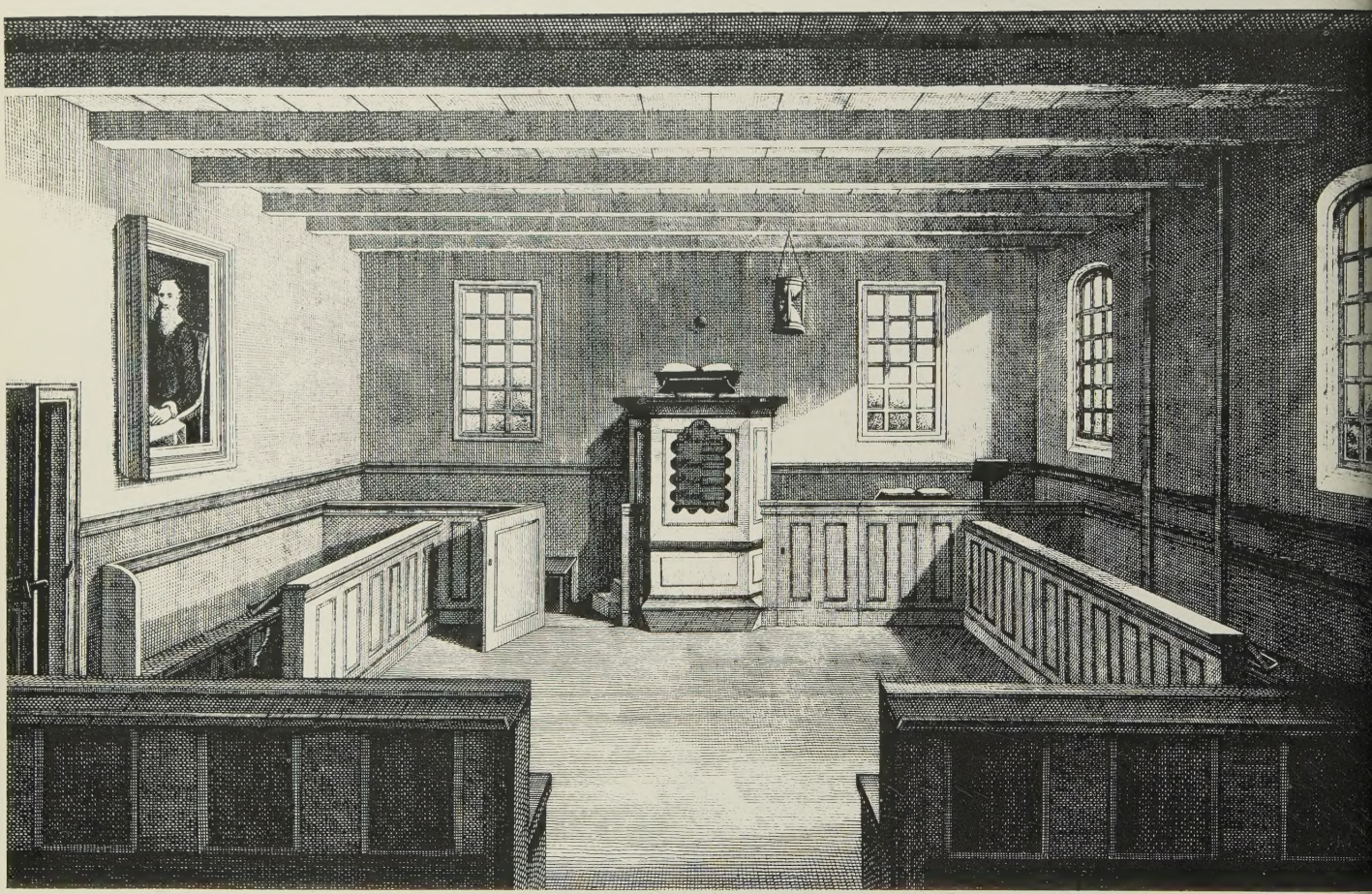

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